THE
# MODERN CHURCHMAN

By identifying the new learning with heresy, you make orthodoxy synonymous with ignorance.—*Erasmus.*

A State without the means of change is without the means of its conservation.—*Edmund Burke.*

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## PROBLEMS OF PERSONAL LIFE

### The Seventeenth Conference of Modern Churchmen.

By the Editor.

THE Seventeenth Annual Conference of Modern Churchmen was held at Oxford, 18th-23rd August, 1930. It was well attended. An audience of over twelve hundred listened to the Presidential Address, 'The Modern Outlook in Ethics,' delivered by the Dean of St. Paul's in the Oxford Town Hall.

The papers which followed the Presidential Address dealt with *Problems of Personal Life.* The Conference theme, selected by the Committee at the suggestion of Dean Inge, aroused considerable interest as was indicated both by the Press notices, and by the Conference discussions.

The Presidential Address and all the Conference Papers (except Dr. Jacks'*) are published in full in this number of the *Modern Churchman.*

Their titles and the names of their readers are as follows:

*The Disintegration of Morality.*
J. C. Hardwick, M.A., B.Sc.

*The Nature of Man: the Old Background and the New.*
J. S. Bezzant, M.A.

*The Christian Moral Ideal: its Nature and Validity.*
F. A. M. Spencer, D.D.

*Principles of Sexual Conduct.*
Douglas White, M.A., M.D.

*Christian Marriage in Idea and History.*
H. D. A. Major, D.D., F.S.A.

*Marriage and Divorce in the Modern State.*
W. F. Geikie Cobb, D.D.

*The Social Aspects of Birth Control.*
Mrs. J. L. Stocks.

*This will shortly be published elsewhere.

*The Influence of Birth Control on Individual and Racial Health.*
C. J. Bond, C.M.G., F.R.C.S.

*Eugenics and Population.*
Eldon Moore.

*The Acquisition and Expenditure of Money.*
René Sellon, M.A.

*The Ethics of Gambling.*
Harold Mulliner, M.A.

*The Science and Art of Leisure.*
L. P. Jacks, D.D., D.Litt.

*The Claims of Beauty in Modern Life.*
The Very Rev. Hewlett Johnson, D.D., B.Sc.

When Jesus Christ looked out on the world of His day, it seemed to Him that there were multitudes of His countrymen who were as sheep having no shepherd. They had no common ideal and no real unity. The meticulous legalism and rigid ritualism of the Pharisees: the hard materialistic utilitarianism of the Sadducees: the patriotic revolutionary fervour of the Zealots: even the rigorous asceticism of John the Baptist, seemed to Him to miss the mark.

He was convinced that He had something infinitely better to offer: 'The Good News of the Kingdom of God' This embodied an ideal less obvious, less tangible, less comprehensible, less easily realizable, and to many less attractive, than any of its rivals. This ideal was Sonship in the Kingdom of God.

It was in many respects misunderstood and misrepresented. Before a century was passed it was commingled with alien elements. Apocalyptic visions, miraculous proofs, theosophical speculations, expiatory sacrificial theories, literalistic legalism, sacramental materialism, ascetic practices, ecclesiastical discipline and organization were springing up with the wheat of the Kingdom, and bade fair to choke it.

It is happily preserved for us in some of our Lord's most profound and original sayings, as also in His character. Into that Kingdom all can enter by the Door of the Beatitudes: all who desire sincerely to make their will God's will, and to serve God by service to their neighbour.

This ideal promises complete personal satisfaction with infinite progressive development. Is it realizable? Some will reply in the words of William Blake:

> 'I am sure this Jesus will not do,
> Either for Englishman or Jew.'

For the Christian of to-day the issue seems to be more clearly than ever *Aut Christus, aut nullus,* but it is the Christ of criticism, not the Christ of tradition. The modern Christian is convinced that Christ's ideal is realizable, but he is also convinced that, to use Sir Joshua Reynold's phrase, 'We must mix it with brains.' In other words he sees more clearly than his Christian predecessors that the lessons of science and history must be utilized in realizing this ideal. It is not Christ's precepts literally interpreted which are universally realizable, but Christ's principles, which are greater this His precepts; and the application of these principles must vary with the expanding experience, growing knowledge, and changing environment of the Christian Church.

The deadliest heresy to-day is so to interpret the practical realization of the ideals of the Kingdom as to conflict with the practical lessons of science and history. The Kingdom comes from above, but its foundations are laid on the earth. 'First of all that which is physical,' said St. Paul, 'afterwards that which is spiritual.'

To-day the Christian has been given, as never before, the power to control the physical world. He may not rightly refuse to use that power. It is, like the knowledge on which it is based, God-given. It is the Christian's business to use that power so as to realize the ideal of the Kingdom, for God would carry on His creative work through him. This means the extension of the Christian ethic into certain departments of life in which, until recently, man did not possess freedom of action.

This aspect of the situation was dealt with in some of the papers read at the Conference, especially those concerned with Birth-Control and Eugenics. The Conference Committee were well aware of the difficulties which faced them in selecting these themes for discussion in a mixed assembly. The discussion of some of them, except by scientific societies in technical language, would have been prohibited by Victorian reserve. The absence of any sense of *malaise* in the actual discussions was very remarkable—perhaps we ought to add remarkable to Victorians, not to Georgians, who seem to be more healthy-minded, because more natural, and more natural, because more scientific.

The atmosphere of the debates was essentially optimistic. The pessimism, which so often characterizes the discussion of the morals of the rising generation and the modern world by senior persons, was happily absent. For the lament, 'Whirl is king, Zeus having been deposed,' was substituted the more sober reflection that the period is one of post-war transition and we must expect in such circumstances a revolt against traditional ethical standards. Sir Arnold Wilson declared that he saw far less of the rebel and the revolutionary in the young man of to-day than in the young man of the Victorian period. He is no doubt right. The young man of to-day is not a rebel; it is the young woman who is, and there are easily understood reasons why she should be.

There seemed to be general agreement with the papers dealing with sexual questions. Possibly Mr. Eldon Moore's paper, very graciously contributed at the last moment in place of one by Dr. Crew (who had had to withdraw on account of sudden illness), secured least agreement. Possibly he told his audience too much or too little about the mysterious and undetermined factor which is responsible for the regulation of population.

In connection with the papers dealing with marriage and divorce, it should be emphasized that Modern Churchmen have no desire 'to make divorce easy,' but they do desire to secure the reform of our present marriage laws so as to relieve certain unfortunate married people of intolerable hardships. Modern Churchmen would do nothing to encourage the experimental or companionate marriage, which the Christian Church, in loyalty to our Lord's ideal of marriage, must refuse to solemnize. Adulterers and adultresses should be discouraged by the State, as should the fools who marry in haste to separate a few months later. Whilst it is right that such should suffer for their misdeeds, it is much more important that both Church and State by proper education and judicious precautions should prevent if possible their committal.

Mr. René Sellon's brilliant paper, which seemed to limit Christian charity to the imparting of superfluities, and suggested that the present financial and public services policy of the State must soon render the exercise of such Christian charity both impossible and superfluous, was not received without dissent. Even though the State deprive its citizens of all save what suffices to meet their barest needs, it will probably leave them an increasing amount of leisure for their private use. The Christian will be able to draw on this for the service of good causes. He will be able to act in the spirit of St. Peter's words, 'Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have give I thee.'

It seems to us that an important question for the modern Christian, but one not explicitly discussed at the Oxford Conference, is this: Am I permitted to do an action for sheer pleasure alone? We think the older Christian teachers would have answered: 'You are permitted to do an action for the glory of God and you are permitted to do an action which benefits mankind, including yourself. Pleasure of a very high degree may enter into all these actions, but to do an action for the sole pleasure of it—an action into which neither of these elements enters, is not permissible.' The modern Christian teacher would not feel that he could take that line. He would reply: 'God is love, and God, so Scripture declares, has "given us all things richly to enjoy."' Providing we enjoy them without doing injury of any kind to others or to ourselves, we may enjoy them, and for the sheer enjoyment alone, remembering always that such enjoyment should be sanctified by gratitude to God for His gift. But it must be remembered that it is better still when that enjoyment is voluntarily shared with another, and best of all when he who might have enjoyed the pleasure denies himself in order that others may enjoy it.

It may be of importance to point out that all the Modern Churchmen's Conference papers were written before the Lambeth Conference Resolutions and Reports were published. This will account for the very few references to Lambeth in our papers. Whilst the Oxford Conference was in session the Lambeth reports appeared, and the general feeling of the Modern Churchmen's Conference appeared to be one of gratitude that even if the Lambeth Fathers had not perhaps moved very far, yet they had moved, and that their movement had been forward—not perhaps always in a straight line, but after the manner of the chess-board bishops—obliquely. The Lambeth Conference is, as St. Augustine said of the Catholic Church, a *corpus permixtum*, and a mixed multitude cannot march very rapidly if it is to keep together.

# THE MODERN OUTLOOK IN ETHICS

By the Very Reverend W. R. Inge, K.C.V.O., D.D., Dean of St. Paul's, President of the Modern Churchmen's Union.

OUR Society has this year chosen a subject for the annual Conference which makes an even wider appeal than the very interesting philosophical, theological, scientific, and historical questions which we have discussed on former occasions. On problems of conduct the Modern Churchmen's Union ought to have a contribution to make. Perhaps we may to some extent be able to mediate between Christians who are not Modernists, and Modernists who are not Christians. That we value tradition in morals is shown by our being Christians and Churchmen, for in ethics above all other branches of religion 'other foundation can no man lay save that which is laid, even Jesus Christ.' That we do not take a purely static view of traditional Christian morality is obvious from our acceptance of the word Modern.

The general subject of the Conference is 'Problems of Personal Life.' It has been decided, wisely I think, not to discuss in great detail the philosophy of Christian ethics, though the third paper will define the attitude of Modern Churchmanship towards naturalism and utilitarianism. It certainly makes a difference whether we approach the problems of conduct from the side of nature-study or from the side of the human mind. The former may lead to a naturalistic theory of volition, the latter to a volitional theory of nature. Such a discussion might lead us into the deep waters of the controversy between the mechanists and those whom their opponents wish to call vitalists. But the present revolt against traditional ethics which it is our chief aim in this Conference to understand and criticize, is not based on any philosophy consciously held, but rather on a collapse of all authority, which has left the present generation without any universally accepted standards. There are some, of course, who congratulate themselves on this new independence—born rebels like Mr. Bertrand Russell, who own *ni Dieu ni maître*; but the majority are perplexed and uneasy. For consider this. It is not

only or mainly Christian authority which has fallen into discredit. We see before us a whole row of prostrate idols. Democracy, Collectivism, Nationalism, Liberalism, Rationalism, all the fetishes of the nineteenth century, receive only a little perfunctory incense from a dwindling band of half-hearted disciples. And yet every one of these idols of the market-place not long ago claimed to speak with authority on questions of personal conduct. 'We see not our tokens; there is not one prophet more.' The only religions which claim to have made some progress since the war are those of the Pope and Mrs. Eddy. Anyone who will speak positively enough is sure of getting some to listen and believe; but most people now ask a prophet to produce his credentials; and he has none.

There are, however, a few fanaticisms still alive, which because they are fanaticisms exert more power than either the number of their adherents or the intrinsic merits of their beliefs would justify. There is Chauvinistic patriotism, a passion in which the nobler and the baser elements are almost inextricably blended. This is still ablaze in some countries, and is strong enough to make the task of the League of Nations and of the advocates of disarmament very difficult. There is Communism, which derives most of its strength from the hatred and envy of the underworld, the waste products of civilization, but which enlists the support of a few idealists. And there is Ultramontane Catholicism, which, like Communism, is a permanent conspiracy against the existing social order. These, in my opinion, are all losing causes. In a world where the nations not only share a common civilization, but need each other to develop their own life, war, and the theory which justifies war, are an anachronism. One lesson of the Great War is that *Vae victoribus* is as true as *Vae victis*. Communism has borrowed the methods of the Inquisition, which, as we see by the history of the Latin countries, may be terribly efficient in suppressing 'heresy,' whether political or religious; but it is predestined to economic disaster, and in trying to destroy at once religion, the family, and private property, it is in far more violent antagonism to human nature than the medieval Church ever was. Lastly, Ultramontane Catholicism is too thoroughly medieval, both in its conception of a universal spiritual empire, and in its whole

outlook, to capture the progressive nations of the world. But though these three fanaticisms can hardly win, they have to be reckoned with, as those who reject every compromise have always to be reckoned with. In the ethical field, they represent a complete abandonment of Christian morality, since they are simply 'out' to win, *recte, si possunt, si non, quocumque modo.*

There are also two deep ethical convictions held, not fanatically, by considerable minorities. Of these the first is Christian morality, which of course is supported in name by Ultramontane Catholics, though their political ambitions for their Church soon carry them far away from the ethics of the Gospels. We who are here belong to the group of Christian moralists; but since we care a great deal about the victory of the Gospel of Christ, and comparatively little about the power and prestige of the institutional Church, we often find ourselves lukewarm about modern attempts to make Christianity popular. The other conviction we may call scientific humanism. It is the conviction that applied science may gradually make the human race not only happier and wiser, but intrinsically better than it is now. This conviction might be described as faith in progress by rational and organized effort. 'Keep the young generations in health, and bequeath them no tumbled house.' Humanity as we know it—so Nietzsche has said—is a bridge, not a goal. This evolutionary optimism, based no longer on any supposed law of progress, but on faith in the power of knowledge and of organized endeavour, is the strongest belief in our day. It is a pure and disinterested aspiration, which has been made possible and reasonable by the almost unlimited vista which, in the opinion of astronomers and physicists, probably lies open for the future of our species on this planet. The majority, however, are still rather slow to realize that we are only near the beginning of our evolution as a race, and that without undue optimism we may cherish long hopes such as few before our time dared to entertain.

At first sight there seems to be no reason why Christians and scientific humanists should not work together; and in my opinion they ought to work together. But when they try to do so, certain differences of principle soon come to light. It is really in order to consider these differences of principle, and the possibility of

adjusting them, that we are holding this Conference. For I take it that in scientific humanism we Liberal Churchmen find ourselves confronted with a standard of right and wrong for which we have a great deal of respect, and with which we should quarrel reluctantly, and yet a standard which does not entirely or very readily harmonize with some of the principles which as Christians we hold. In very general terms we may perhaps accept the epigram in which Amiel sums up the difference between Christianity and humanism. 'Christianity brings and preaches salvation by the conversion of the will, humanism by the emancipation of the mind. The one wishes to enlighten by making better, the other to make better by enlightening.'

The first of the real differences which I will consider is one which we have discussed at one at least of our previous meetings—the contrast between the other-worldliness of Christianity with the this-worldliness of scientific humanism.

Traditional Christianity has not concerned itself with the earthly future of the human race. We all know how this defect in the Christian world-view (for so we must regard it) came about. The first mould into which the new religion flowed was apocalyptic Messianism, which looked for a rapidly approaching supernatural intervention which was to bring the world as we know it to an end. Then, when the Gospel penetrated to the Graeco-Roman world, it congealed, as it were, at a period when civilization was on the down-grade, and when society was, to a strange degree, without hope for its own future. There were then no 'causes,' in the modern sense, to work for. Further, the Church was politically impotent, and short of a social revolution, which the early Christians never thought of advocating, there seemed to be no way in which the Church could work for the betterment of society, except by forming a band of brothers pledged to live in peace and charity among themselves. No doubt this *ordo amoris* might have been regarded, and was sometimes regarded, as the seed of a happier social order, which might have a much wider expansion. But this thought was seldom dwelt on. Plato's ideal city had taken wings and flown away entirely into the unseen world. And therewith came the nemesis which always attends this disruption of experience into two sharply separated worlds. The present life became denuded

of its values, and was almost made over to the powers of evil. And the spiritual world was vulgarized into a supernumerary second physical world. It was set within space and time; it was given a geography and a history; and while it was allowed to suck all the values out of the world of temporal experience, those values were themselves corrupted and materialized by being given a setting in an environment of physical pleasure and pain, of reward and punishment. This life was regarded as a period of probation, but of purely individual probation; for even works of charity were not valued for the good which they did to the recipients, or to society, but for the merits which they stored up for the doer, and possibly for others who might, as it were, borrow from the saint the surplus of his virtues. The very wide difference between the traditional Catholic and the modern view may be illustrated by a well-known sentence from Newman, who seems to have taken a perverse pleasure in emphasizing those parts of Catholic doctrine which conflict most violently with secular notions of right and wrong. He says that it would be better that the sun should fall from heaven, that the earth should be destroyed, and that all its inhabitants should perish in agony, than that one person should commit a single venial sin, though no one was injured by it. In other words, the temporal consequences of our conduct, however injurious they may be, are wholly irrelevant in computing the moral innocence or guilt of our actions. This point of view must not be lost sight of when we enquire into the causes of the Catholic attitude towards such questions as the control of conception. Even in the next world there is, for the traditionalist, no essential connexion between moral desert and reward or punishment. When the two worlds have been so completely separated as they are in traditional theology, the punishment of a bad man is not to become a worse man. By a purely arbitrary and retributory sentence, he is condemned to be baked in an oven. Forgiveness too comes to be regarded as a mere remission of penalty. The merits of Christ are 'imputed,' not imparted to us, and so we are placed in a class to which we do not rightly belong.

I have purposely stated this dualism of popular belief in an unfavourable and almost unfair manner. It is only unfair because conscience and experience correct, to some extent, the

crudity of the doctrine itself. Let us now contrast the point of view of scientific humanism.

For this school there is, of course, no future life for individuals to be considered. The standard by which our actions are appraised is not clearly defined, but seems to be a kind of evolutionary utilitarianism. Wrong-doing is anti-social conduct, and the welfare to be aimed at tends to be regarded as that kind of happiness which the average man would desire for himself and his friends. This is something better than vulgar hedonism, and it is not selfishly individualistic; but it is unspiritual, in that it disregards the aspirations of man, recognized alike by Plato and by Christianity, to establish a foothold in the kingdom of unchanging reality, the home of immortal spirits in the immediate presence of God.

J. B. Mozley, in one of his remarkable University sermons, exclaims, 'Beware of that formidable enemy of what is spiritual —an earthly future.' And more recently Bernard Bosanquet has said, 'To throw our ideals into the future is the death of all sane idealism.' Scientific humanism stakes its all on an earthly future. I have more than once traced this attitude to the myth of automatic or inevitable progress, conceived of as predestined to endless duration, which arose in the revolutionary period and affected the speculations of many Victorian philosophers and scientists.

It was a stimulating creed, and acted like the bunch of carrots which costermongers are said to hang before the noses of their donkeys. Men thought that they were marching whither the immutable decrees of nature were leading them, and so they really achieved some things which were valuable but by no means inevitable. And yet disappointment and disillusionment dogged the footsteps of the nineteenth century optimist. As Lippmann says in his picturesque language, 'That century was for ever blowing the trumpets of freedom, and providing asylums in which its most sensitive children could take refuge. Wordsworth fled from mankind to rejoice in nature. Chateaubriand fled from man to rejoice in savages. Byron fled to an imaginary Greece, and William Morris to the Middle Ages. A few tried an imaginary India, a few an equally imaginary China. Many fled to Bohemia, to Utopia, to the Golden West, and to the Latin

Quarter; and some, like James Thomson, to hell, where they were

> "gratified to gain
> That positive eternity of pain
> Instead of this insufferable inane."'

The promises of liberalism, the promises of secularism, have not been fulfilled. The process of emancipation, which was exciting while there were kings and priests and policemen to flout, is now complete. The excitement is over, and what has been gained? The evidence, says Lippmann, lies all about us; 'in the brave and brilliant atheists who have defied the Methodist God and have become very nervous; in the women who have emancipated themselves from the tyranny of fathers, husbands, and homes, and with the intermittent but expensive help of a psychoanalyst are now enduring liberty as interior decorators; in the crowds enfranchised by the blood of heroes who cannot be persuaded to take an interest in their destiny; in the millions, at last free to think, who have made the moving pictures and the popular newspapers what they are.' The young people are even more disillusioned with their own rebellion than by a near inspection of the broken idols of their grandparents.

Secularism, in a word, though it seems so obviously right for those who have to live in this world, leads to a quagmire. Mankind will never be willing entirely to give up this world for the next, nor the next world for this. Some *via media* must be found. Here we have no continuing city; our citizenship is in heaven. And yet, as even the mystical Platonist Plotinus tells us in a sentence which refutes many misunderstandings of his philosophy, 'All things which are "Yonder" (in heaven, as we say) are also Here.' 'Let us fly hence to our dear country,' he quotes from Plato; but he adds that we have not far to go; 'there is not much between.' In fact, the kingdom of heaven is within us.

That the synthesis outlined in such maxims as these is extraordinarily difficult is proved by the way in which the two sides tend to fly apart again. Whitehead says boldly that it is possible to spiritualize our religion overmuch. And on the other hand, a secularized religion has neither savour nor salt. The former error may lead us into a realm of values which have no reality,

the latter into a realm of realities which have no value. Philosophy can show us that we must do justice to both claims if either of them is to be established; but to make this truth our own is not the beginning, but the end of wisdom.

The question comes to a head in the attitudes of traditional Christianity and of scientific humanism towards asceticism. Asceticism has several sources, but essentially it is an attempt to free ourselves from the pull of the immature or unregenerate impulses, the desire to appropriate, the desire to enjoy, the wilful attitude towards the external world, which the childish or unconverted mind thinks ought somehow to conform to our wishes, the domination of transient whim or passion. I am not defending the excesses of asceticism, which may be encouraged by Manichean contempt for the body, or by the wish to induce artificially the mystical trance, or by pathological conditions. But the conviction that there are parts of our nature which while we are spiritually immature need to be 'repressed'—St. Paul even says buffeted and crucified—is part of Christianity, and of practically every other great system of ethics. The modern spirit for the most part regards this view with impatience and rejects it with repugnance. It fastens on this or that prohibition which has been supported by religion, and condemns all such rules together as irrational taboos. It would forbid nothing, except what causes injury to other people, and substitutes the duty of happiness for the happiness of duty. In this repudiation of moral restrictions it claims to have the support of modern psychology.

In the Victorian Age almost all voluntary self-denial of the old type had disappeared. The cold tub in winter, confined to the upper and middle classes, was really the only survival, for we cannot dignify the dietary rules of the modern Catholic, who sometimes performs his or her austerities with the help of a French cook, with the name of asceticism. But one ascetic practice remained, and was inculcated with great severity—I mean the duty of sexual continence for the unmarried. This obligation is really founded on the belief that all irregular indulgence contaminates the body, which ought to be kept clean as an abode of the Holy Spirit. If we read St. Paul carefully (there is very little on the subject in the Gospels) we shall see that this, and

not the injury done to the other partner in the act, is the motive to which he always appeals. 'Shall I take the members of Christ and make them the members of a harlot? God forbid.' 'He that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body.'

So the maintenance of strict continence became the crucial test for those who wished to take upon themselves 'the whole yoke of the Lord.' It was the favourite subject of spiritual romances in the early Church. Men and women set themselves severe trials to prove that they had completely mastered the lusts of the flesh. A special crown was reserved for virgins of both sexes. In practice, the large majority scarcely attempted to observe this duty; but all the greater was the reverence felt for those who had achieved what to average men and women seemed heroic virtue.

In the age of Queen Victoria, the average standard of sexual morality was probably much higher than in the so-called ages of faith; but continence was not generally regarded as a part of asceticism, which since the Reformation had been almost discarded in theory. The convention was that chastity was quite easy for all women, and not too difficult for any man.

But our own generation, especially since the war, has revolted against the rule of Mrs. Grundy. It has realized, and has not been ashamed to proclaim, that the facts are very different from the Victorian convention, which indeed was only kept up with the help of a good deal of concealment and hypocrisy. The Victorians, not recognizing the ascetical origin of the Christian rule of continence, were fond of emphasizing the cruelty which masculine license entails upon the weaker sex. Our generation retorts that the cruelty certainly exists, but that it is the work of the Puritans. Many of them do not admit that there is anything necessarily contaminating in unhallowed unions. They attempt to dignify lust by calling it love, and argue that if a married man or woman feels a physical attraction to a person other than his or her legal mate, 'love' should be the law-giver, and give dispensation from all earlier vows. Here we see in a repulsive form the result of a complete repudiation of the idea of self-control and self-denial. In the place of a harmony of unified purposes, under the control of the highest faculty of the soul, the Stoic *hegemonikon*, we have an attempt

at a harmony of gratified impulses or instincts; although moralists of all ages and creeds have hitherto agreed that this disorderly mob can never be kept in order except by a stern discipline.

The proper attitude for Christian teachers is to emphasize the sacredness which the sexual act has acquired as the sacrament of married love; the real degradation of profaning this sacrament (and after all, even the new moralist does not wish to see his sister or daughter seduced); the fact that it has been chosen by the Church as a peculiarly good discipline in self-denial; and, as regards adultery, that for a man or woman to break the most solemn contract into which they enter in the whole course of their lives, is an exceedingly disgraceful and dishonourable act, which no decent person should be seriously tempted to commit. On the other hand, the Victorian attitude towards unmarried girls who have fallen into sin was cruel, unjust, and unChristian; and the obstacles which that age placed in the way of the campaign against venereal disease, which they spoke of as the penalty ordained by God for sin, were really shameful. We have no wish to put the clock back fifty years.

On the higher levels, there is not much divergence between Christian ethics and those of scientific humanism. Traditional theology, which tries to bribe, terrify, and deceive the unconverted, is odious to the modern spirit; and on the other side, no Christian can be satisfied with the Cyrenaic moral anarchism of the new rebels. But on the higher levels, the two sides approach each other on the plane of disinterestedness. Where this is present, there is not likely to be much more divergence than a difference of emphasis. Some difference of emphasis will probably remain. For instance, the Christian moralist will lay more stress on human personality, on the absolute value of the individual soul, on detachment from the useless paraphernalia and machinery of life, on the reverence due to the conscience or inner light, and on the respect which should be paid to moral tradition as embodying, on this side, the stored experience of the race. The Christian moralist, in a word, will be more cautious in giving free rein to the ideas of the present generation, which are likely to exhibit the one-sidedness and impatience of a revolutionary age. But I think we shall be willing to allow

that in some particulars the tradition really needs revision, and that we ought to give our support to several demands of the new morality, which were hardly recognized as duties in the traditional ethics of the Church. I propose to mention some of these, without attempting to draw up an exhaustive list.

The strongest movement in modern ethics is unquestionably humanitarianism. Cruelty is now almost the only vice or sin which arouses intense moral indignation. Many who profess to have abandoned the vindictive theory of punishment will be heard to advocate retribution in kind on those who have maltreated children or animals. This is, in degree at least, a new thing; it has altered our beliefs and our behaviour in several ways. I need only remind you of the disappearance of pictures of torment in the future life, of the humane treatment of criminals and lunatics; of the agitation against capital and corporal punishment, and perhaps above all of our recognition of the rights of animals. The movement has its sentimental, mawkish, and absurd side; but on the whole it represents the most decided moral improvement which we can, without fear of contradiction, claim to have been made in the modern period.

Liberal Christians must co-operate whole-heartedly with these reformers in removing any needless cruelties which still remain, among which I should stigmatize the heartless moral barbarity shown by our newspapers to criminals and their families. And in regard to cruelty to animals, we must decisively reject the teaching still given in the Roman Catholic Church, that the lower animals have no rights, but are 'even as stocks and stones.' We must give careful consideration to several questions which the new views about the status of animals and their relationship to ourselves have brought into prominence. With what limitations should vivisection be allowed? Have we the right to use the animals for food, and to enslave them for our needs? What moral judgment ought to be passed on hunting, fishing, coursing, pigeon-shooting, big game shooting, pheasant or partridge shooting? I will not discuss or attempt to answer any of these questions. What is important is that we should admit that they are moral questions, which must not be put aside as having nothing to do with the good life.

Another branch of the new ethics concerns the care and

honour to be paid to the human body. It was part of the ascetic movement, which captured Christianity and was not started by it, to feel shame at the idea of having bodies. Persons of both sexes disliked to see themselves naked; in some Catholic convents to this day I am told that the women never uncover their bodies even in private. There was an actual cult of dirt and vermin. The sculptures of the Middle Ages, which often show a refined and accurate observation of the forms of plants, leaves, and flowers, reveal a total ignorance of human anatomy, and complete indifference to the beauty of the human form. The modern spirit is in vigorous revolt against all this. In parts of the Continent, especially in Germany and Sweden, young people of both sexes take exercise almost naked, and are proud of displaying the physical development which is the reward of their healthy mode of life. It is a revival of the Greek spirit. Here surely Liberal Christians should sympathize entirely. If there is a morbid element in some of these societies for sun-bathing and rhythmic exercises—I do not think this is at all common—we shall help to keep the movement wholesome by taking interest in it. We ought to feel that if our bodies are the temples of the Holy Spirit, they ought to be as fair as we can make them. Why should a man keep himself in a want of condition which he would never tolerate in his horse?

That we should be interested in eugenics follows from what has just been said. Racial hygiene is as much part of morality as personal hygiene. We know less about it, but we ought to give our support and sympathy to those who are trying to know more. To show no interest in these researches, to ridicule them and try to rouse prejudice against them, is a clear proof that those who behave in this way are hostile to the new outlook in ethics, and precisely in the field where it is most far-sighted and disinterested.

A very different subject is that of nationalism and internationalism, of peace and war. War begins to be a crime as soon as it ceases to be inevitable, and in modern civilized societies, linked together at so many points that if one member suffers all the members suffer with it, honourable emulation ought to take the place of bitter rivalry, unscrupulous diplomacy, and organized homicide. The false theory which enlightened Christianity

has to combat is that the Gospel is merely a system of private ethics, and has no relation to the dealings of nations with each other. This has been maintained by many Christian writers, but is none the less quite indefensible.

Christian social ethics will be discussed during this Conference, and I will not anticipate what the readers and speakers may say about it. We have no right, in my opinion, to label our own political opinions Christian politics and economics, as if differences of view on these subjects were impossible to a Christian. It would be disastrous if the Church of England were to organize itself into a Centre Party, bargaining with other parties for its support in return for concessions. I will only say that in my opinion, though the Gospels have very little guidance to offer us on problems of distribution, from causes which are easily understood when we consider the state of society, the position of the Church, and the absence of any expectation of a long career for mankind on earth, we may obtain much more definite help in problems of consumption, which are perhaps even more important. Steady industry, simple habits, and avoidance of all luxury and extravagance, are the type of living which Christ regarded as most desirable. The economic theory which the Americans call 'consumptionism'—mass production, high wages, and lavish spending on standardized comforts—does not seem to me to be the kind of life of which He would have approved. Whatever complicates life without adding anything of spiritual value is, so far as it goes, injurious. It should also be emphasized that there is no hatred of the rich in the New Testament, except in that most Jewish of the epistles, that attributed to James. The service of Mammon is condemned because it leaves us no time for the service of God. The avaricious man has mistaken his values, and is addressed, not as 'thou thief,' but as 'thou fool.' Professor Gardner, in his excellent little book on the *Evolution of Christian Ethics*, denounces the 'artificial multiplication of inconveniences,' and the vulgar luxury of rich ladies, who in America and at home constitute the largest and most irresponsible leisured class in the world. This evil is not so great in France and Germany.

On these questions, except perhaps on the last, there will not be very much difference of opinion. The new knowledge has

made us conscious of new duties, and the Church must choose whether it will support those who see these new duties, or whether it will remain wedded to unprogressive ethical views supported by an authority in which our generation is ceasing to believe. There are, however, other questions on which our path is not so clear, and on which there may be real differences even within this society.

I look forward to an interesting discussion of marriage and divorce, a question of great and urgent importance. We shall probably all agree that Christ meant to inculcate a higher and a stricter standard for married people than had ever been enunciated before; and also that it was not His method to legislate. He came before His countrymen as a prophet, not as a lawgiver. What conclusions will be drawn by the speakers from these premisses I will not guess. The question is one of the most difficult of all those with which both State and Church have to deal.

Another very difficult and delicate subject is birth-control. I have long studied this question in all its bearings, and I have come to certain conclusions which I may state briefly without spoiling the debate to which we are soon to listen.

Some method of checking the natural growth of numbers beyond the means of subsistence is always necessary, and has nearly always and everywhere been practised. The choice for us lies between the prevention of conception, and abortion, which is very much more common than is generally known. The phenomenal increase of population in this country since the beginning of the industrial revolution has necessarily come to an end; no further expansion of the population of this country seems to be possible without reducing the standard of living. The decline of the death-rate in half a century from 22 per thousand to 11 or 12 has made a parallel fall in the birth-rate inevitable. On the other hand, it may be argued that the decline in the birth-rate has now gone quite far enough, since on the basis of a stationary population the deaths now slightly exceed the births. I must explain that the crude death-rate of 11 or 12 is quite illusory, and is due to the large proportion of young persons, whose death-rate is very low (only two per thousand at the ages of 12 and 13) in our population. The real death-rate

may be computed by taking the expectation of life on which the actuaries of the insurance companies base their calculations. This expectation, taking the average of the two sexes, is at birth about 57 years, which when divided into a thousand gives about 17.6. The birth-rate last year (1929) was only 16.3. It is obvious that as the age-distribution of the population becomes more normal, the crude death-rate will creep up till it corresponds to the real death-rate. This has been the position in France for many years. I calculate that the population here will become stationary, with a slight tendency to decrease, between 1940 and 1945. It is probable that the optimum population of these islands in the future will be considerably less than the forty-eight millions who now inhabit them, and in that case we may be glad to see a decrease in our numbers; but it would be far better if the pressure could be relieved by State-aided colonization, instead of by further lowering the birth-rate, since we do not wish to see fewer of our own countrymen in the world. The ruinously demoralizing dole of course impoverishes the nation economically as well as morally.

It is useless to discuss the morality of birth-control apart from these considerations. There is no automatic adjustment of births and deaths to suit the local and temporary conditions of each country. If the optimum population is exceeded, there must either be a reduction in the standard of living, or the surplus population will be removed somehow. We have to consider what method of rational adjustment is most free from moral objections. If we investigate the problem in other periods and in other countries, we shall see that the population was and is kept down by methods which we do not wish to see in our society, such as infanticide, abortion, famine, pestilence, and war. We cannot leave the question of numbers to *laissez faire*, while every other branch of social life is brought under rational control. The question of the quality of the population is at least as urgent as that of quantity. The whole future of our country is at stake, and we shall get very little help from the politicians, who know that the unborn have no votes. As Liberal Churchmen, our duty is to try and break down the steady opposition of traditionalists, and especially of Catholics, to any impartial consideration of this vital question. The problem bristles with diffi-

culties. We cannot prevent the new knowledge being used by unmarried persons, and by selfish couples who wish to have no children. The claim that we ought to make is that the question shall be handled without prejudice, and that every aspect of it shall be fairly considered.

Another important question, not chosen for discussion at this meeting, is whether the condemnation of suicide by traditional Christian ethics has not been too sweeping. For my own part, I think that every criminal condemned to death ought to be allowed to carry out the sentence upon himself in his own way, and I could not censure a man who, knowing that he is dying slowly of an agonizing disease, wishes to shorten his sufferings. This is a well-known ethical problem, which has long been eloquently debated on both sides. But I think that the unqualified condemnation of the Church has been at least partly due to the notion that our eternal destiny depends on our departing this life without any mortal sin unrepented of; and as no one can repent of having killed himself, suicide is the most terrible of all sins. This notion, I imagine, is not held by any of us here; and if it has affected the traditional judgment on this particular act, it is right for us to reconsider the question on other grounds. I must, however, add that if I were attacked by a painful illness, I hope I should have patience to wait for the end, and I do not think I should wish anyone near and dear to me to act otherwise.

These are some of the questions which the New Outlook on Ethics seems to suggest. There is hardly one of the topics which I have handled cursorily in this introductory paper on which we may not hope that more light will be thrown by more detailed discussion. We shall I hope be on our guard against supposing that these post-war years represent a permanent change in our attitude to all social and moral questions. For instance, the outbreak of sexual laxity is a familiar consequence of war and revolution. It is quite possible that some of us will live to see another Puritan reaction. And the acceptance of universal suffrage is already producing results which may be economically disastrous, and which in that case may lead to other political arrangements, unlike those which we sometimes assume to be specifically Christian. Some may even think that the authority

of science will not always be supreme. With these last I do not agree. But the lamentable condition of the arts proves that our civilization is lop-sided, and that we need, among other things, an aesthetic revival, which will have repercussions upon ethical theory.

Christian ethics are and must always be theocentric. Professor Gardner's warning that secularism is the one philosophy with which we can make no terms remains true and pertinent. But while our faith in the eternal values keeps our ship anchored amid treacherous currents, there is a sense in which we should forget the things that are behind and reach forward to the things which are before us. For mankind is in the making, and some of our traditional morality belongs to a very immature stage in our development. The religion of the Spirit is not timid; the Spirit searcheth all things. And I venture in conclusion to suggest that in a surprisingly large number of cases the new morality will be found to join hands, across centuries of barbarism, error, and perversion, with the principles which are plainly laid down in the New Testament.

# THE DISINTEGRATION OF MORALITY

By the Rev. J. C. Hardwick, M.A., B.Sc.

THE Attorney-General in April last was reported in the Press as having made the following remark: 'It is amazing,' he said, 'as one casts one's mind back, to see how much public opinion and outlook have changed in the last twenty years.' He was speaking *a propos* of the Divorce Court, and was referring to what many people would call the disintegration of morality.

There is no denying that when the average man speaks of morality, he means sexual morality, though only one of the Ten Commandments, or at most two, deals with this side of life. Our preoccupation with sexual morality has been attributed to our ethical standards having been formed under the influence of a priesthood which has been inspired by ascetic ideals and has attached supreme ethical value to the virtue of chastity. But probably, while this has to be taken into account, the sanctity of marriage, for the average man, is closely associated with the sanctity of property, and it is for this rather than for any religious motive that he clings to it. Wherever property is respected, marriage is respected. This is why the Victorian epoch was a moral age.

For the average man, the disintegration of morality means a decline of respect for the laws of property, and a decline of respect for the sanctity of marriage. Marriage and property are in his eyes the twin foundations upon which morality rests. If these are disturbed the deluge follows. It is no accident that the revolutionary social reformer is invariably critical of the marriage bond. From Shelley to Mr. Bertrand Russell you get the same critical attitude both towards property and matrimony.

It need not be supposed, however, that the average man who holds by marriage would subscribe to the priestly ideal of chastity. So long as marriage itself is respected, he is prepared to allow a considerable degree of latitude, just as, so long as property is respected, he will allow a considerable degree of sharp practice. A man can be a whoremonger, but he must not profess

a belief in free love; and he can be a swindler so long as he is not a communist. Many swindlers have received public honours and titles, and no one thinks on that account that society is disintegrating. But we should not tolerate the presence of a declared communist upon the Honours List—unless he were a member of the Fabian Society.

Thus many of those who tell us that morals are disintegrating mean no more than that there is a tendency to question the sanctity of matrimony and of property. But we have to remember that in the majority of cases those who criticize these two institutions do so not as immoralists, but as moralists. They criticize morality in the interests of morality much as Roger Bacon criticized the science of his day in the interests of science. From this point of view the disturbance of our moral standards may be an indication of moral vitality rather than of moral decadence or corruption.

The fact is that we have no right to speak of the disintegration of morality until things have reached such a pitch that society no longer continues to hold together. The continued functioning of society is an outward and visible sign of the inward and spiritual grace which we call morality, which is by no means simply equivalent to respect for another man's wife and property. The cohesion of society is one of those things which, like the pressure of the atmosphere, we take for granted because it is always there. We should soon notice it if it were taken away. For apart from morality there could be no social life; there would at least have to be some sort of morality of self-interest, such as that assumed by the philosopher Hobbes in his speculations about the origin of society. It may be no more than an agreement for me to keep my hand off your goods, if you will keep yours off mine. But even this minimum of morality *is* morality.

The point is that morality is not merely a private affair of intimate relationships between the sexes; it is more widely extended than this, and is in fact the mortar which keeps society together. Unless a fairly high standard of morality existed, we should none of us be clothed, transported, and fed with so much regularity as we are at present. The existence of Bradshaw is itself an indication that morality is not yet extinct. The com-

plexity of modern society makes considerable demands upon the morality as well as upon the intelligence of the individuals who compose it. Even the prostitute has to display a good deal of morality: she has to pay her washing bill like the rest of us.

The morality of the average man is a morality of custom. He acts as he does because people have always acted like that, just as he holds his opinions because other people hold them. And it is a mistake to pour scorn upon conventional morality and conventional opinions. Behaviour becomes conventional when it has been in vogue long enough for it to have become habitual. It has become conventional behaviour for the average citizen, unless he is Chancellor of the Exchequer or a Trust Magnate, to keep his hand out of other people's pockets, but it is commendable behaviour all the same.

If the circumstances of life never changed, morality would be almost entirely conventional. In primitive communities where things have gone on unchanged for centuries, moral behaviour is almost automatic and rigidly conventional. We may observe this conventionality of behaviour in any primitive and savage tribe and in our Public Schools. The savage is the most moral, as he is the most conservative, of persons. The same may be said of the schoolboy. It is true that the morality of the savage and the schoolboy is not ours, but it is that of him who observes it, and this is the important thing. The appropriate action, which is to say the moral action, is prescribed to the savage or the Public Schoolboy by custom; and custom is respected because conditions have been stable for generations. The missionary may not think that the South Sea Islander is moral, but that is because he does not belong to that community nor share its habits and traditions. Similarly with the non-Public School man. To him fagging or flogging may seem degrading, stupid and immoral, but, as an outsider, his judgment is defective; he does not share the tradition.

We, however, are less fortunate than the savage and the Public School-boy. The conditions of our life, far from being stable, have begun to change rapidly, so that customs which have done duty for generations are found to be no longer appropriate. We can no longer rely on the conventional action being the right and appropriate action. Hence some of the old habitual

ways of behaviour have to be modified or abandoned, and this makes it look as if morality were falling to pieces. And, of course, a good deal of the old morality is doing so as fast as it can.

For example, if it can be shown (I am not an economist) that the tendency of modern capitalistic industry is over-production, what becomes of the gospel of work, sedulously preached by nineteenth century moralists? Or if it be true that the weakness of modern industry consists in faulty distribution, is it not inevitable that the morality of the conducting of industry for private profit should be called in question? Or again, if it be true that over-population is a menace to peace and civilization, what becomes of the morality of being fruitful in the procreation of children? Again, Dr. Ruth Reed in her recent study of the Modern Family (Knopf., 12/6) tells us that 'the family system has resulted in the recruiting of the social population from the lower social and economic strata of the community.' If this be true, it is difficult to see how changes in our moral judgments and our moral practice can be avoided.

Of course a community is not bound to adapt its customs to meet changing conditions. We may see this stability of moral standards in India where people will patiently allow their inadequate pasture to be consumed by useless and diseased cattle which it is a sin to destroy. As moralists they prefer poverty and starvation to immorality. Even in England, the devout will resist the dissemination of medical knowledge amongst women and youths of the working class lest this should lead to immorality. But we may safely assert that the community which displays too much conservatism will have to face perils at least as great as those with which a too adventurous society is faced.

Thus we must not conclude that wherever there is a tendency for habits and customs to change, that morality is decadent and corrupt. Change may be a sign of life as well as of decay. If the most unchanging morality were the best, then complete stagnation would be the most complete form of morality, and the Laws of the Medes and Persians the perfect constitution.

Changing conditions, then, may demand certain changes in conduct, and the demand is all the more easily complied with because changing conditions are not without their effect upon

traditional and commonly-held beliefs. That social and even material conditions do affect beliefs can hardly be denied. The unsettling effects of sudden changes in the value of money, have been pointed out by Dr. Wingfield-Stratford, and indeed recent events in Europe have made this evident. Would the Russian Revolution have been possible apart from the collapse of the rouble? And has not the motor-car had something to do with the decline of religious belief in England? Certainly Army life changed the intellectual outlook of an enormous number of young men.

But whether beliefs decay owing to circumstances or because they have been intellectually refuted, there can be no doubt that when beliefs change, ethical standards follow suit. But we are not entitled to assume that a discarded belief was necessarily a true belief, or that the morality which has been abandoned was a perfect morality. The beliefs and the morality based thereupon may both have been hopelessly out of date, and ripe for replacement.

No doubt some beliefs would have a more direct bearing upon conduct than others. For example, an assured belief that the Ten Commandments were written by the veritable finger of God might be expected to have a direct bearing upon conduct. In the first place there would be no room for doubt about the content of the moral law, and in the second place there would be no doubt about the rewards and punishments which would follow obedience or disobedience. Both these elements of certainty might be expected to form a solid basis for morality. But when belief in the supernatural authority and origin of the Commandments has disappeared, it becomes possible not only to disobey them, but to criticize them, and to say that their content ought to be different. In other words, the Commandments carry no more weight (if as much) as an Order in Council.

The results of other beliefs might be more indirect, though not less effective, by producing a sort of moral scepticism, such as some modern psychology seems to induce in its disciples. One might reach the conclusion that moral distinctions cannot be taken seriously, and that in any case the human species, as a sort of odious vermin, is a tribe to which one owes little, in the way of duties, and from which one can expect as little in return.

Then there are the new theories according to which there is neither sense nor merit in mortifying one's appetites, and that the dangers of vice are far less than those of virtue. If we come to believe that we can only exercise self-control at the cost of ruining our mental health, and that traumas, neuroses, and complexes are the price paid for morality, we shall be satisfied to let ourselves drift. And it would be no exaggeration to say that many people nowadays are as afraid of a repression as they are of bad drains and contaminated milk. Just as the fear of hell frightened our grandfathers from the paths of vice, so the fear of a complex scares us from the paths of virtue.

One belief which is now fairly prevalent, at least among the rising generation (it has received the *imprimatur* of Mr. Beverley Nichols) is that immortality or survival is so unlikely, as practically to have been ruled out as a factor in conduct. We must remember that philosophers of such eminence as the late Mr. F. H. Bradley, and Professor Samuel Alexander, have summed up against it. It is not so much by banishing the fear of hell and hope of heaven that disbelief in immortality affects us, as by confining our view and interests to this life. It is unnatural to be other-worldly if one has ceased to believe—or has never believed at all—in another world. We must remember nowadays that people in shedding such beliefs as this, go through none of the storm and stress which were customary a generation ago. The modern individual wastes very little time or energy in the discarding of beliefs; he sheds them without a sigh. Only a minority of people nowadays have any strong belief in immortality. To some the idea of survival presents no attractions. And if Spiritualism ever comes to establish its doctrines, we shall all be in the position of having to believe in survival, while devoutly wishing that it were not true. All this confusion and scepticism is bound to affect conduct, and (what is infinitely more important) to affect ideals.

Yet we must remember that even in the presence of all this uncertainty, habit and custom still remain strong. The sceptic retains his habits of morality much as the drilled soldier retains his discipline in the confusion of battle. Practice, fortunately for us all, does not follow too closely on the heels of theory. People who hold the most extreme views are often excessively

harmless in practice; the believer in communism is fidgety about his change, and the theoretical free-lover is afraid of his wife. A community, if it has reasonable health and vitality, can consume a good deal of intellectual alcohol without getting drunk. Also, it is very easy to exaggerate the extent to which advanced ideas are popular, when in point of fact only very few people trouble to have ideas at all. You could put all the advanced thinkers in England into quite a small room.

But the fact that so many of us make far better followers than guides makes it very important that there should be reliable guides to follow, even if these are few in number; and this is just where we appear to be rather at a loss.

We are told, for example, that the Church has lost its influence. This is very likely true, but it is not a circumstance to be pleased about, because the Church in the past has not only offered ideals of conduct, but has also claimed to show how to realize them. Both these contributions to morality are extremely important, and neither is much good without the other. No agency has as yet stepped into the Church's shoes here, by offering us new ideals and showing us how to realize them. It is true that there is no lack of new ideals; there is in fact a glut of them, so much so that the very word idealism makes one tremble. But none of these advocates of the New Chicago (I will not speak of the New Jerusalem) will tell us how to get there.

On the other hand there are plenty of people who can tell us how to control our behaviour, and can offer us an up-to-date version of Loyola's *Spiritual Exercises* (has Pelmanism yet gone out of fashion?), but they can give us no ideal at which to aim—save perhaps the ideal of business success. Psychology can make us virtuous (so it claims), but can it tell us anything about virtue? Until he can do this there is very little point in leaving the priest for the psychologist. It is easy to exaggerate the value of any science. Chemistry has given us dyes and manures, but it has also given us explosives and poison gas; and psychology, if it teaches us to educate children, also teaches us to miseducate them. My own view is that the reason why education has hitherto done so little harm is that it has been providentially inefficient. If education should ever become efficient, the results would be frightful. Psychology has already taught

the newspaper proprietor and the advertizing specialist the arts of hypnotizing and deceiving the public. In the next war we shall have chemistry and psychology, both highly efficient, working in unison, and we shall see (or our sons will see) what science can do when it gets busy. The fact is that the psychologist in his horn-rimmed spectacles is no more to be trusted than the priest in cassock and biretta. On the contrary, he is less to be trusted. When the scientist gets in the saddle, we shall long for the free old days of Torquemada. The Inquisitor of the future will not burn us, he will experiment upon us; he will take a man's soul and turn it inside out. We must not forget that the first psychologist was the devil—the father of lies.

What we need to-day is not an up-to-date method of attaining an uncertain or doubtful ideal. What we need first is to grasp our ideal, and then to devise methods to reach it. Such new ideals can scarcely be said as yet to have emerged into daylight —the dark night of the Victorian period still broods over us.

Yet we are slowly making up our minds about a few things. In the first place there is a widespread revolt against the competitive scramble, when I dare not tell the other fellow he is a thief because I have to be a thief myself in order to live. In the next place there is a tendency to realize that the life is more than meat and the body than raiment. A man must not merely keep alive; he must *live*, and use his powers of mind, body, and spirit to the full, and this involves the development of the creative instincts, as against those which are merely acquisitive. The rising generation does not believe in the doctrine of living in order to work, it doubts whether activity is always more beneficial than inactivity, and it believes in work only so far as *some* work earns him the right to live—the idea being that each man must pull his weight in the world and not be a passenger. This side of the modern ideal has been expressed by the late Mr. D. H. Lawrence when he says that 'only third-rate swabs are pushing to get on nowadays,' and when he observes that the older generation got *on*, but never knew how to get *off* again.

Another feature of the present moral outlook is its individualism. This, however, has little in common with the individualism of the nineteenth century. Then each man was assured that he was the fittest to survive, and therefore deter-

mined that whoever went down, *he* would not be underneath. The modern individualism is concerned chiefly with personal freedom and personal integrity—the determination, so far as possible, not to be duped, and not to be enslaved, but to be true to oneself.

Mr. Lippmann has drawn a picture of the present generation disillusioned after overthrowing the idols of the nineteenth century. This does not seem to me to represent the realities of the case. The present generation does not trouble to overthrow those idols (they still have many worshippers—the temple of Mammon will never be empty), it passes them by: it knows that they *are* idols. It recognizes that, save in science and in industrial expansion, the nineteenth century, far from being a creative age, was an age of cowardly reaction tainted by romanticism. It took fright at the French Revolution and never recovered its nerve. Its preoccupation with industry was merely a compensation: the man who is afraid to think is always busier than other people. If we respect the nineteenth century scientist and industrialist—the former for his self-sacrificing labours, the latter for the labours to which he sacrificed other people—nineteenth century art revolts us, and nineteenth century religion strikes us as a shoddy article (what about Samuel Wilberforce?) both spiritually and intellectually. In that age a logical man was an atheist, and a religious man (like Newman) a Roman Catholic.

However, there is no need to dwell upon a depressing subject. The rising generation believes that the moral and spiritual bankruptcy of the nineteenth century led to the War—and that in itself is enough to condemn it, and to make one try to forget it. One should not look back at the smoke of Sodom, or recall a bad dream.

It is perfectly true that the rising generation cannot formulate its ideals, it does not tell us what it is out for. Perhaps it does not quite know. As one of them put it to me, they are walking round in circles for the time being. Hence, to us Victorians, they look a trifle ridiculous. But he laughs loudest who laughs last, it is we—the survivers of a discredited and bankrupt age—that the angels find amusing.

For my part, I am waiting. I believe that if the rising generation have any creative power in them, and any intellectual and

moral stamina wherewith to back it up, they will produce something a good deal better than any of us have produced.

For one thing, they start without one heavy handicap; they have not to waste all their mental and moral energy by the storm and stress involved in getting rid of effete beliefs. They begin at twenty at the point which we have painfully reached at forty-five. They are fresh: we are exhausted. The war helped the post-war generation by inducing a high death-rate of beliefs. It would be easier to bring back pre-war trade than pre-war beliefs. To learn is hard, but to unlearn is far harder. There is an inertia in ideas as in material objects, when they have begun to move; the difficulty is to get them to stop.

The trouble with ourselves is that we have been so preoccupied with liberating ourselves from the superstitions in which we were born and educated, that it is the destructive side of the business that engages us most. When an old belief gives up the ghost, we rub our hands. But there is no virtue in destruction—save as a means of clearing the ground—and I do not think we have it in us to be creative: but the rising generation will perform that *rôle*. The spirit is there, and we shall see its fruits. The disintegration of morality, as it is called, is a sign that things are moving—that they will never be the same again, that the knell has struck which is at once a passing bell and the tocsin of a new age.

What part is the Church to play in the creative epoch which lies ahead? Our bishops have been talking: what have they said? They have said more than some of us expected, but, alas, the leadership, the initiative, has passed from them: they are fighting a rearguard action.

'Christianity is not taking the lead in civilization,' says Dr. Anesaki, an erudite Japanese observer, 'but is struggling to accommodate itself to it.' It is something to try to accommodate yourself to the culture with which you are surrounded (this is what Modernists have at last persuaded the Church of England to try to do). But this is not enough; the mediaeval Church did not accommodate itself to the culture with which it was surrounded: it *created* that culture, inspired it and guided it.

Can the Church, can Christianity, take a hand in inspiring, and moulding, the new civilization which is being born? That

is the question. Does Christianity, does the Church, still embody the creative urge which brings a new age into being? Does the Church, does Christianity, contribute the vital ideas, the energy to formulate them, the courage to carry them out?

Or does it merely wring its hands over what it calls the disintegration of morality? As if it were not a good sign that Victorian morality, and cash Christianity, were disintegrating rapidly. These things must die, and we need not shed tears over them. After all it is a true saying that while there is death there is hope.

The Attorney-General is certainly right: opinion and outlook have changed and are changing. To those who hold by the old ways, the new morality seems like the absence of morality. For, as the innovator in art is denounced as the creator of abortions, and as the innovator in religion is anathematized as a blasphemer and atheist, so the innovator in morals is regarded as an immoralist. Time will show whether or no the charge is justified.

# THE NATURE OF MAN: THE OLD BACKGROUND AND THE NEW

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THE deliverances of the several branches of scientific research justify beyond reasonable doubt a broad theory of Evolution: there is no alternative statement, possessing any title to credence, of that continuity in change which the known universe everywhere reveals. But Evolution remains an inevitable inference rather than an observed fact. Primarily a theory of biological phenomena, it has no one concise form which is universally applicable to other similar collections of phenomena which it is employed to illustrate. The theory of Evolution is not self-explanatory and its formulation changes. It no longer means, as it once did, the simple progressive unfolding of that which already existed actually if germinally from the beginning. Evolution is now described or qualified as 'emergent' or 'epigenetic.' This means that existing elements, interacting with each other and with their environment, themselves form creative syntheses from which there arises what is genuinely new. There is continuity in complex change rather than simple continuous change; and small changes are no more self-explanatory than big ones. Probably, throughout all Evolution, physical and mental, there is both continuity and discontinuity, and the words 'emergence' and 'epigenesis' must not be allowed to hide the fact that evidence of the *cause* of the newness is lacking and the newness unexplained.

Before we can usefully indicate what are the essentials of a Christian doctrine of man, it is necessary to notice, though it must needs be inadequately, a widespread notion that the undertaking is predetermined to futility. It is very widely supposed that the modern scientific knowledge about man and the universe, which is conveniently summarized in the word Evolution, is adverse to even the most liberal form of religion, and deprives

moral effort of meaning. Since the discovery that the celestial bodies obeyed mechanical laws rendered deterministic mechanism attractive as an explanation of all things, there has been less and less doubt that, at least as a methodological device, deterministic mechanism in the pursuit of scientific knowledge is within its own limits supreme. It is a much more recent recognition that *it is a mental device*, immensely useful in assisting discovery and thereby increasing human knowledge, but nevertheless only a point of view. This, however, is now increasingly recognized and proclaimed by some of the eminent men of science who use it most successfully. They are ceasing to claim that it can hope adequately to explain man in his organized complexity, or concrete human experience at the level of self-consciousness; and it is precisely this which is the primary datum of all knowledge. Deterministic mechanism is itself a thread of human thought woven through physical science by the mental loom which forms the structure of understanding.[1] Science involves a progressive series of abstractions from direct human experience. It then pursues each of these abstractions until it appears possible to express the 'ultimate' in terms of the most abstract. The evolutionary process is a process because it is synthetic: man and human life are supremely synthetic. The method of science is analytic. Facts of psychology are expressed in terms of physiological mechanism, and these in turn are resolved into terms of chemistry and physics. The assumption that these abstractions are the concrete reality of experience is what Dr. Whitehead calls 'the fallacy of misplaced concreteness.' It is to these abstract entities that deterministic mechanism is relevant, for it is, in Mr. Collingwood's words, 'like mathematics, a product of the abstractness of the scientific consciousness."[2] It involves an ideal reduction into mere units of what concrete experience knows as individual facts which have *meaning*. Actually, we feel, we see, we hear; 'matter' is the name for the identity which underlies all objects of sense-experience. 'The old-fashioned gross matter was a mark of incomplete materialism, for its grossness was just a relic of sensible qualities not yet extruded from the pure con-

[1] See Dampier-Whetham, *A History of Science*, p. 371.

[2] *Speculum Mentis*, p. 166.

cept.'[3] Hence mathematics, mechanism, and materialism are essential to all sciences as we know them. Materialism, says Mr. Collingwood,

> 'is the truth about any object, just in so far as this object is by abstraction reducible to terms of pure mathematics; and no object is so reducible except by consciously or unconsciously shutting our eyes to everything which differentiates it from anything else. This conscious or unconscious act of abstraction is the very being of the scientific consciousness, and it is therefore no matter for pained surprise when science shows a bias towards determinism, behaviourism, and materialism generally.'[4]

By its self-chosen methods and principles science can do no other without ceasing to be what it is.

Life, as we know it, is not found apart from matter; but we cannot say that it is matter. It is not a 'thing' which, with sufficiently accurate observation, we could first isolate and then examine in isolation. All we can assert is that life 'emerges' under certain favourable synthetic material conditions: we do not know that life and matter are not an ultimate dualism. If life should ever be produced experimentally, what will be observed is a certain type of behaviour from which the presence of life will be inferred. Life is a matter of inference; and we can conceive no circumstances in which it would not be just as correct, or more correct, to say that a certain synthetic form of matter is the simplest form of life than to say that life is one of the properties of matter. We infer life to account for observed behaviour, and such an inference is possible and satisfactory only because we have immediate knowledge of life within us. The inference is pragmatically verified.

What is true of life is more obviously true of mind. The biological evolution of the more advanced from primitive types of life is established. It appears that we must analogically but inevitably infer a similar evolution of mind, though the separate evidence is in certain respects less conclusive. Our only direct knowledge of mental life is that of our own. Accurate observation of our own mental processes is very difficult, and to understand them is much more difficult. A regressive examination of life at lower stages than the human, shows that simpler types of bodily organization behave in a way which leads us to infer a less complex mental life, until a point is reached at which

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 167. [4] *Ibid.*, p. 168.

the existence of any mental life becomes a very dubious inference. We cannot actually trace the evolution of mind out of anything which is not mind. 'Emergence' becomes a general feature of the whole evolutionary process, and so the abruptness of discontinuity is decreased; but to call the whole process 'creative' does not inform us what the creative agency is.

Thus, while subsequent research has confirmed the essential features of the Darwinian scheme and has contributed enormously to the understanding of man, it is not, even in its modern form, self-explanatory or wholly adequate. The attempt to ignore mind, or purposive activity, as a possible agent in organic Evolution, and to account for it by means of 'selection' alone, in a way such as will harmonize with a mechanistic view of the world, has no prospect of success. Its failure is that mind exists as an unexplained remainder. It cannot be included in the scheme: to leave it out is absurd, since the scheme itself is of mental origin and construction.[5] Mechanism implies our human knowledge of machinery, and this we know only as expressing the purposes of mind. Observation can reveal an orderly sequence in occurrences; but any relation between these events such as we call 'causation' is read into experience by the mind which experiences; it is not directly observed. If that relation exists in reality, the universe is the expression of Mind, and of its nature our minds partake: if it does not exist in reality then 'causation' is merely a necessary human symbol, and mechanistic concepts are only diagrammatic, and in no way explanatory.

To-day, when we ask, 'What is man?' there is much less of the sanguine expectation that by abstracting life and mind, and analyzing what remains, we shall reach any useful knowledge of the nature of man. Such explanation can only explain what remains after all that is most characteristic of man has been eliminated. And even then no sure foundation for mechanistic materialism at present exists in what was formerly its citadel. Dr. Whitehead says:

> 'It cannot be too clearly understood that the various physical laws which appear to apply to the behaviour of atoms are not mutually consistent as at present formulated. The appeal to mechanism on behalf

[5] See W. McDougall in *Evolution, A Collective Work*, p. 352.

of biology was in its origin an appeal to the well-attested self-consistent physical concepts as expressing the basis of all natural phenomena. But at present there is no such system of concepts.' [6]

We may feel reasonably sure that in the future science will subsume under a more adequate mental mechanistic model the indeterminacy which at present exists in the analysis of matter. The point is that if we do, our confidence depends on an act of faith of the same nature as that which believes that the universe will prove to be not destructive of its own highest values. And whatever the future triumphs of science in this direction, there is no reason to think it can ever do more than show how great is the extent and at the same time how subordinate the significance of the mission which mechanism has to fulfil in the structure of the world.[7]

Man, as alone we can know him, is a complex animate organism, thinking, imagining, willing, purposing, creating, desiring what is not and striving to achieve it. When a man of science devises an ingenious experiment with complicated apparatus, and after prolonged effort reaches some conclusion; when from the mind of an architect or an engineer there finally issues, after gigantic corporate endeavour, a cathedral or an airship—if we are asked to believe that these processes are 'explicable' (or could conceivably be predictable) in terms of electronic movement determined by mechanical response to an environment itself similarly determined, we can but feel that the religious demand upon faith is slight and reasonable in comparison. Credulity and incredulity, like other extremes, meet. However self-consistent the deterministic argument may be, it fails to convince because, when I am told that a pending decision or action is already pre-determined, I have a knowledge which is more immediate than any other knowledge can ever be, that it is not. If anyone thinks that observation of my past behaviour, or any other knowledge about me, would enable an infallible pre-

[6] *Science and the Modern World,* p. 150. *Cf.* Eddington, *The Nature of the Physical World,* pp. 220, 306*f*. He regards the work of Schrödinger and Bohr as showing that there is an ultimate indeterminacy, or alternative uncertainties. In the attempt to fix the position of an electron its *velocity* becomes incalculable, and in the attempt to calculate its velocity its *position* becomes indeterminate. A greater accuracy in fixing its *position* can be obtained only at the cost of greater inaccuracy in calculating its *velocity,* and *vice versa.*

[7] Lotze, *Microcosmus,* Introduction, p. xvi.

diction of my decision or action in given circumstances, those given circumstances must include the all-important one that the prediction is carefully concealed from me. If I know it in advance, I can falsify it.[8] The success of the method once again depends upon ignoring self-conscious mind, and treating me as an automaton; but to ignore the self-conscious mind in man is to ignore the most significant thing about him, and to abandon in advance all hope of explaining *man*. The human mind, as we know it immediately, depends upon a temporal continuity of mental life, which cannot be resolved into a disconnected or discrete stream of sensations. The possibility of description and explanation, of human knowledge of actual events as connected and determined, cannot itself be explained except upon the assumption of an abiding soul or ego, the subject of our conscious states, and which appears to function even in sleep. As Dr. Tennant says,[9] psychology destroys some attributes of the old soul-substance, but there is a residuum, derived from the given, which is indispensable. It is that of the *continuant* of which feelings are states, and knowledge and volition are activities. It is the one spiritual thing assuredly known. Of all human knowledge whatsoever we may certainly use the words of Dr. Whitehead that 'apart from the experiences of subjects there is nothing, nothing, nothing, bare nothingness';[10] and also the words of Locke which, with developments, Dr. Whitehead accepts as the basis of his 'philosophy of organism':

> 'It is past doubt that there must be some real constitution, on which any collection of simple ideas co-existing must depend.'[11]

Nor does there seem any escape from Dr. Whitehead's further conclusion that consciousness arises in a late derivative phase of complex integrations, and 'primarily illuminates the higher phase in which it arises, and only illuminates other phases deri-

[8] It is not suggested that the choices possible to a man are not severely limited. There is no need to suppose the absurdity of an unlimited and unconditioned freedom of the will.

[9] See *Philosophical Theology*, Vol. I, p. 101. I should like to say that Dr. Tennant's volumes can only be *studied:* they cannot be merely read. I have read them but once, not without care; I think that no work of such fundamental importance has appeared for a very long time.

[10] *Process and Reality*, p. 234.

[11] *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, iii, iii, 15. Quoted by Whitehead, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

vatively as they remain components in the higher phase.'[12] Our concrete experience of life and our derivative knowledge of the past history of life, though it may contain much unconscious metaphysic, and may need much criticism and refinement, nevertheless remains the datum from which we must start and to which we must continually return. The truth is well put by Prof. Carveth Read:

> 'We must begin with experience, because otherwise there is no problem; and return to experience, since otherwise no solution is made good; and proceed on the analogy of experience, since otherwise there is a failure of that continuity and resemblance in which explanation consists.'[13]

I have emphasized these considerations because it is quite fundamental to indicate that if we would know what man is, we must abandon all attempts to seek that knowledge without *primary* attention to that which *differentiates* man from the inanimate world and from the animal creation; or, in other words, it is futile to attempt to comprehend man in terms of anything lower than himself.[14] The spirit and preconceptions with which we approach the personal problems of life depend upon our belief on the more ultimate questions of the nature of man, and these depend upon his true position in creation.

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The old background of all consideration of man's nature was, as we all know, an elaborate theory based upon the *Genesis* story accepted as revealed truth; but that story did not originate as ready-made information oracularly conveyed to man whose only interest was to receive it. It was the product of experience and reflection. In the form in which we have it, the story dates from a time subsequent to the monotheism and lofty moral teaching of the prophets. There can be little doubt that originally it was not an explanation of realized sin and consequent cessation of spiritual relationship with God, but rather an explanation of the struggle of life, its toil and its woes, of the experienced fact

[12] *Ibid.*, pp. 226*f*.

[13] *The Metaphysics of Nature*, p. 33.

[14] *E.g.* morality and religion are activities of *organized* life and mind, and if the complex organism is something uniquely different from the unorganized constituents into which it may be imperfectly analysed, no considerations against morality and religion based on evidence derived from these *unorganized* constituents are of very much relevance.

that life was not set in a Paradise whose ways were pleasantness and its paths peace. We know the story for myth—as an attempt to account for facts at a low level of experience, when the knowledge requisite for explanation was scanty. Undoubtedly the explanation was accepted as fact, but it does not appear to have influenced the theology or anthropology of the Old Testament.[15] The Old Testament, like Jesus, was more concerned with the fact of sin than with theories of its ultimate origin. As for human suffering, the classical treatment of the problem in the Old Testament goes far to repudiate the idea of causal connection between sin and suffering. The only 'sin' of which Job repents is his attempt to comprehend God's dealings with him—that is his 'sin' was a more developed form of that same curiosity which, according to *Genesis* iii, led to man's first disobedience and loss of innocence.

The main lines of the historical Christian conception of man were laid by St. Paul and fixed by St. Augustine. The real origin of what they wrote is to be sought in the intense inward experiences of men belonging to the twice-born type of humanity. St. Paul accepted the *Genesis* story of the fall of Adam from primal innocence as fact, and what we know of his experience and of his estimate of human nature is related in that setting. The great passages in *Romans* had very little influence in the early Church. The writer of II *Peter* recognizes in St. Paul 'things hard to be understood, which the ignorant and unsteadfast wrest'; but it was not until the Pauline Epistles were read as a *corpus*, and their text made the basis of systematic exposition, that the need for interpretation was realized. Pelagius' appeal to tradition was natural and largely justified; while the greatest importance of St. Augustine is that he had no predecessor and has had no very original successor as an interpreter of St. Paul. Even now it is hard for most of us to understand St. Paul's doctrine of sin and of human nature except through

[15] As Dr. N. P. Williams has emphasized in the Bampton Lectures for 1924, the story in *Genesis* iii contains no idea of Original Sin, and is not the *original source* of the idea of the Fall, which arose in late Judaism out of reflection about realized sinfulness. An alternative explanation of experience is found in *Gen.* vi, in the unnatural union between 'the sons of God' and the daughters of men. See *The Ideas of the Fall and of Original Sin*, pp. 20 *ff.*

the mind of Augustine. It is true that the African's extreme views of the total depravity of human nature owing to the transmission of the corrupted seed of Adam, and the implications of this horrible doctrine, have not been fully or officially accepted by the Church as a whole. But if this fact renders their rejection easier it does not neutralize their historic effects.

There is no doubt—if there ever was, modern psychology has removed it—that Augustine saw more deeply into the springs of human nature and estimated its clamorous appetites and instincts, with their great power for sin, more accurately than the Pelagians. Compared with his, their psychology is superficial. But equally important is the fact that to-day we cannot suppose that the experiences of a St. Paul or a St. Augustine were not to some extent conditioned by what they believed about sin and its origin. The ceaseless inward struggle between the ideal and instinct and appetite was regarded as itself unnatural, exceedingly sinful, and the result of sin. Man, by reason of organic descent from Adam, was responsible for his instincts; their mere possession was sin. Without a belief in the primal innocence and sin of man and in the supposed consequences, the inner experience of conflict might be just as intense, the victory of impulse over ideal just as crushing, and the craving for deliverance just as imperative, but the *sinfulness* of the condition would not naturally be estimated in the same way. The emphasis would be placed elsewhere and would be qualitatively different; and in the religious and the moral life, emphasis and quality are most important.

We are all aware that the data of biological evolution have shown that the apes and man represent variations from an earlier common stock. Much that theology—specially popular theology—regarded as essentially and inherently evil in the human instincts and passional appetites, we know to be a non-moral, natural, and inevitable inheritance from our ancestry. There has been no fall from pristine innocence; no state in which man's instincts were under full control. Man, though by no means in a steady line of unbroken progress, has very slowly gained in moral status and achievement. The inevitable conflict between instinct and the developing sense of 'oughtness,' with all its consequent misery, so far from being sinful, has been and is the

means of man's advance.[16] Psychology confirms biology, and reveals man's natural appetites as neither good nor evil, but potentially very powerful for either; they may be a savour of life unto life, or of death unto death.

The influence of the Fall-doctrine upon the Christian conception of man has been immense, and of that subtle kind of which the obvious affords no adequate measure. It still colours much of the language of penitence and thereby fosters the disposition of the soul from the beginnings of the religious life. But no place for a Fall or anything resembling it can be found within the known history of man. This must not merely be recognized, but the necessary adjustments must also be made, if a true doctrine of man and a right estimate of sin are to be formulated. Yet there are attempts to reinstate the Fall and even to increase the emphasis upon its fundamental importance. The most distinguished exponent of these attempts puts forward a theory of a transcendental, pre-human, or pre-cosmic 'Fall.'[17] He would recognize the Stoic conception of the 'seminal-reason' as reappearing in a modern biological form in Bergson's *élan vital*, though with an important difference. It has to become the World-Soul, 'the only-begotten Universe' of Plato's *Timaeus*. It was created 'the image of its Maker, most mighty and good, most fair and perfect,' and 'free, personal and self-conscious.' Then

> 'at the beginning of Time, in some transcendental and incomprehensible manner, it turned away from God in the direction of Self, thus shattering its own interior being . . . and thereby forfeiting its unitary self-consciousness, which it has only regained, after years of myopic striving, in sporadic fragments which are the separate minds of men and perhaps of superhuman spirits.'

This is the 'Fall' by which creation with all its forms of life 'from the bacillus up to man,' became apostate; this explain

[16] The modern world needs deliverance from the irrational and debilitating fear of complexes regarded as the penalty of self-discipline. It is very strange that the fear of complexes should have arisen side by side with the discovery of more adequate means of resolving them. Seldom indeed, has the discovery of the cure of a disease so happily coincided with its diagnosis! We shall come to realize that complexes are among the least of the ills which afflict us. Not a little of the demand for 'self-expression' is the infantile instinct for the gratification of every desire masquerading in the subtle disguise of a divine impulse towards a wider and deeper personality. If others have an equal right of self-expression this demands a very serious control of the individual self.

the struggle and pain to which Evolution everywhere testifies, and also that inherited infirmity of will on account of which we so often cannot do the things that we would.

This extraordinary theory, so reminiscent of Gnostic speculation, rests on no verifiable evidence. It is confessedly the result of *à priori* reasoning from the inward experience of man. Nothing known suggests that the evolutionary process, conscious sin apart, might or ought to have been other than it is. The criticism of any such theory must be that it inevitably encourages an entirely unwarranted if not demonstrably false view of the world and of man. It would have us regard the whole evolutionary process as the difficult and gradual reversion of an earlier corruption. We must suppose the free, personal, self-conscious World-Soul first to have suffered complete disintegration of all those attributes, and then to have remained so for countless ages before there was a sign of returning consciousness, despite the continual succour of the Divine Logos.[18] The theory is put forward as the best that can be done towards a solution of the problem of evil, but it does nothing to remove that intractable difficulty in Theistic belief.[19] The presence of sin and suffering in an evolutionary process of struggle and progress from rudimentary beginnings is understandable if not free from difficulty: their origin in a personal self-consciousness which enjoyed the fulness of the vision of God, unhampered by any instincts derived from an evolutionary past, is utterly inexplicable. Why should this glorious image of God turn from its Maker? That any such temptation could arise, or possess the

[17] N. P. Williams, *The Ideas of the Fall and of Original Sin*, pp. 522 *ff.* It must not be supposed that, by this attempted reconstruction of the Fall, the author defends the Augustinian conception of 'original guilt.' His repudiation of the more terrible features of Augustinianism is as explicit as his claim that the Church generally has never been committed to them.

[18] Dr. Williams speaks of 'the patiently working, healing and refining influences' of the Divine Logos, 'sustaining the blinded Life-Force, which otherwise would have lapsed into nothingness' (p. 529).

[19] To me there appears to be no doubt that if, in the modern world, belief in God can only be maintained on the theory of a pre-mundane transcendental 'Fall,' *it will not be maintained at all.* The popular reproach against Theology as a science is that, unlike other sciences, it has to begin by proving the existence of its subject-matter, God. *If this is only possible by the initial imagination of an ideal creation, utterly different from the actual creation which alone we know, it will inevitably become impossible.*

least seductive power, presupposes precisely that defect already existing in the World-Soul for which its sin is supposed to be responsible in man. To avoid the obvious infinite regress, Dr. Williams would account for the World-Soul's turning away as due to 'some uncaused cause, lying within its own being.' Thus does courageous assertion solve mystery! But to little purpose; for if God is not the only 'uncaused cause' we must acknowledge an ultimate personal dualism; and there also remains the old difficulty that God is still responsible for creating a World-Soul capable of turning from His will, and for creating it, presumably, with foreknowledge of the disaster that would ensue. Nor does such a theory safeguard the goodness of God. The animal creation which, though it is supposed to manifest evil, is acting only in accordance with the fundamental law of its own being and is therefore guiltless, nevertheless is encompassed by much apparently useless suffering. The ineffable goodness and love of God specially interposes for the redemption of man, but there is no such intervention for the rest of creation, which remains still undelivered from its suffering and from the law of its own being determined by the 'Fall.' This theory reveals nothing so much as the desperate position of that *à priori* theology which, arguing from an *à priori* supposed knowledge of God, interprets what God has actually done only on the lines of preconceived notions of what He must have done; and is it not something less than theology which, on some other basis than empirical fact, proceeds to create additional difficulties by what is put forward as explanatory theory? Ideas about God, Man and the World which nothing that can reasonably be called knowledge allows us to maintain, should be rejected; otherwise eventually they will harm any theology into which they are built, and discredit any ethic of which they appear the fundamental postulates. The Fall-story of *Genesis* may stand as an illustrative allegory of what happens when, for the first time in the experience of every man, the will consents to what is known to be wrong; but in no other sense can a 'Fall' have any place in a constructive doctrine of man.

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Knowledge of the constitution of the universe, of the processes which have been and still are operative in our immediate

environment and in the history of man, offers us a choice. We must either recognize the Divine activity in the creative process as a whole, or we shall have great difficulty in finding reasons for bringing in God at all. Unless the *course* of events suggests a directing agency, it is hard to find grounds for assuming any such agency at the *beginning* of events. But when we speak of 'the process as a whole,' it does not mean that God is the *immediate* cause of every event isolated from the whole. What Dr. Tennant calls the 'relatively settled order' suggests that the creation has a 'delegated autonomy.' This is required for the reality of personal freedom and is therefore necessary for the development of moral and spiritual life. Evolution shews us what God has been creating. From that knowledge, and from the implications of the fact that our reverence for moral excellence is not mere prudential appreciation, but the most sacred thing we know and a condition of any communion with God, we can feel some security as to what God is creating now. It suggests to man his own nature as a fellow-worker with God. The love which we must needs value most highly 'emerges,' like all else we know, in the world as we know it. It is not conquered by suffering and defeat, but finds in them its great opportunity. It is in the light of this actual world, through whatever of God has been expressible within it and in terms of human nature, that we have either conceived or have been able to assimilate any idea of God, of His goodness and His love. We can know nothing and achieve nothing except through the means with which the universe provides us.[20] Experience proves that man is ennobled as he strives, rewarded as he achieves, and degraded only when he refuses the struggle. If there is any knowledge of God that can be revealed to man by any means whatever, it is the fact of highest significance for the doctrine of man that he can understand and profit by such revelation, as indeed he must do if it is to be revelation at all.[21] For the unintelligible, whatever else it may be, is not revelation.

[20] It is true that 'we brought nothing into this world' in a sense in which it is *not* true (unless Christian faith is vain) that 'it is certain we can carry nothing out.'

[21] It may be felt that this and what follows must lead to an irreligious exaltation of man, or to 'anthropolatry.' It is not and need not do anything of the kind. The inevitable result of man's realization of his ever-

Again, in the doctrine of man the old Fall-background has eclipsed the implications of the Incarnation, which are much more real and significant. The Incarnation has been defined and studied in its bearing on the doctrine of God, and as the interpretation of Jesus. It has been most strangely undervalued in its bearing upon the doctrine of man, for which its implications would appear to be just as apparent and less difficult. Jesus was truly man. True manhood is therefore capable of being the vehicle of God's supreme manifestation; for we have no reason to suppose that Jesus' goodness was the miraculous achievement of God overcoming every temptation by means not available to other men. It is indeed strange that the truth about man should be inferred either from the supposed innocence and fall of primitive man or from the imagined sin of an entirely suppositional World-Soul, rather than sought in Jesus. The doctrine of the Incarnation, in any form which it can reasonably assume in the modern world, proclaims that man's nature is potentially what the manhood of Jesus was. That is why His human life, which itself reveals no penitence, evokes human penitence. In Him, man can see what he ought to be, and thereby what he actually is and is not. What signifies is not any abstract possibility of the standard of Jesus being attainable, but rather that the ideal once seen must be kept in sight as the condition of human advance. Its eclipse means degeneration.

It is one of the commonest charges against a form of Christianity which frankly accepts modern knowledge that it is deficient in its conception of sin. Yet the evolutionary view of the world and its consequences certainly afford no grounds for

actual character as a sinner in dire need, is penitential abasement; but the theologian cannot have regard only to that, and ignore man's *capacity for penitence and realization of sin* which, as indicating man's true nature, are facts more important and more pregnant than the sin itself. Realization of sin must be more securely based than upon the auto-suggestive power of such phrases as 'I am a sinner; how dreadful is my sin!' So with man's knowledge of God: he who has it is humbled before Him, but that condition does not reduce the implications of the fact that man can have the knowledge. Thus, it is less than reasonable to hold that the world shows design if the only rational and moral creature known to us does not indicate what the designed end is; and if he does, this is the most important fact in formulating a doctrine of his nature. But realization of the fact is not anthropolatry, for it only exists in order to be transcended. Man may exhaust no values, but he shares in some and communes with the Source of all.

any superficiality about sin. It is no argument against the truth or adequacy of facts that they are not fool-proof, nor immune from shallow interpretation. Pelagianism gets little support from modern knowledge; and where there are points of resemblance between inferences from modern knowledge and ancient heresy, the fact that the difference between the modern and the ancient Christian world-views can be more easily minimized than exaggerated, generally robs the resemblance of serious meaning. Man is not responsible for his inherited instincts and passions, nor for his early and often not for his later environment which further determines the initial limits of his freedom. Hence evolutionary conceptions undoubtedly appear to remove *the sense of the all-pervadingness of sin*, but they do nothing to reduce the sinfulness of deliberate sin. Nor does the positive Christ-ideal reduce the sense of shame and responsibility for those defeats by instinct and passion to which the will only consents when through weakness it is overcome. The ideal of Christ will always convict us of sin, and in His light we cannot plausibly accept any cloak for our sin. The facts of the evolutionary world, when pondered—and one reason why they have not been pondered is that they have not been fearlessly taught in their religious setting, but only without it[22]—must increase at one and the same time man's sense of responsibility and also of insignificance. From one aspect of the facts, and it is a real one, the value of man's brief span of life and his puny contributions within so vast a scheme, appear too trivial to discern; the way in which the Divine purposes will be realized, or how good will triumph, are so obscure, and man's personal share therein so unimaginable, that it is his religious self-committal in faith to the Divine grace which always prevents and follows him, that alone can sustain. On the other hand, man's life is a conflict, containing much that he must needs regard as good and of worth; progress is almost harder to maintain than to win; only with difficulty do reasonableness, morality and love hold their own. Powerful elemental forces seem always near to sweep them away. Yet it is equally beyond doubt that the whole creative process

[22] The only result of the hopeless attempt to combine Evolutionary- with Fall-conceptions is to obscure the significance of the one which inevitably undermines the meaning of the other.

has tended towards the production of those treasures; and this gives solid ground for the necessary self-committal, and for trusting that all the resources of God operative in the creative process encompass the man who desires and tries to realize those treasures. The supremely necessary religious trust that God is really beforehand with us in every motion we make towards the good — and this is the heart of the doctrine of Grace — so far from being excluded, is really inevitable in an evolutionary world which is God's. Whether utter dependence on God can be born of the paradoxical facts of man's insignificance and responsibility remains to be seen. What is certain is that if it cannot, it will not be evoked by attempts to reinstate any doctrines of human nature which are not consonant with known facts. The facts are really pregnant with all that is profound in the positive Augustinian thought of man's dependence on God; but attempts to reproduce the Augustinian conceptions of sin and human nature, or to restore a truly religious attitude by a revival of modified Calvinism, though they may have a temporary success, will be followed by disastrous reactions. The revolutions in knowledge and in the thought of our age have a deadening or devastating effect upon men who see no sure foothold. Short-cuts to 'faith' on the one hand, and on the other wild experiments uncontrolled by any knowledge of the costly-purchased wisdom of the past, prove irresistible or attractive according to temperament. The former will have no permanence and the latter are more likely to lead to bitter disappointment than to useful discovery. Human nature must frequently re-learn even its own deepest needs.

Nevertheless moral and spiritual goodness must be the fruit of freedom, experience, choice: it must be acquired and could not have been created in the beginning. If man is faithful to his deepest judgment that moral worth is the supreme excellence, and if it be conceivable that God's purpose is the shaping of human souls through conflict with and conquest of uncertainty, difficulty, pain and evil, then the world and human life are not ill-adapted to those ends. A long history exists to teach us that nothing worth while is attainable without stern discipline and labour; but we know by the spirit which dwelleth in us that what we desire is our own as well as the Divine ideal.

Nothing in the teaching of Jesus suggests that a conception of man which omits all idea of a Fall, and grounds itself upon known facts as affording the only reasonable basis upon which inner experience can be interpreted, is other than His own. It is in the fullest sense Christian. The Synoptic Gospels nowhere suggest that Jesus held the later ecclesiastical doctrine of human nature. He neither ignored nor minimized the fact of sin. His earliest message was a call to repentance, and He hinted at no restrictions of the need of it: the references to the ninety-and-nine who do not need it cannot be other than sarcastic. Evil proceeds from within, out of the heart of man, and the Lord's prayer contains a petition for forgiveness; but, to quote Dr. Williams:

> 'affirmations that this evil tendency or quality is transmitted by physiological heredity, and is ultimately derived from a primordial transgression—affirmations which we have seen to be necessary constituents of a Fall-doctrine—are conspicuous by their absence.' [23]

Jesus gave no teaching about the ultimate origin of sin, and He seems to have attributed evil rather to the external activities of the devil than to an inherent corruption of human nature.

No doctrine of man, however faithfully derived from inward experience interpreted in relation to other knowledge, can be complete or Christian if it ignores the future. Scientific prediction may not be knowledge; but, for what it is worth, it confirms the Christian doctrine that this temporal world will not everlastingly continue to produce higher and higher values: the things concerning it have an end. The following passage indicates the ultimate future of the universe as science predicts it:

> 'Everything points with overwhelming force to a definite event, or series of events, of creation at some time or times, not infinitely remote. The Universe cannot have originated by chance out of its present ingredients, and neither can it have been always the same as now. For in either of these events no atoms would be left save such as are incapable of dissolving into radiation; there would be neither sunlight nor starlight, but only a cool glow of radiation uniformly diffused through space. This is, indeed, so far as present-day science can see, the final end towards which all creation moves, and at which it must at long last arrive.' [24]

[23] *The Ideas of Fall and of Original Sin*, p. 97.

[24] Sir J. H. Jeans, *Eos, or the Wider Aspects of Cosmogony*, p. 55. See also ch. vi in the same author's *The Universe Around Us*. *Cf.* ch. iv in Eddington's *The Nature of the Physical World*.

It appears that Naturalist, Humanist or Positivist doctrines of man must all alike accept as their end the oft-quoted words of Mr. Bertrand Russell:

> 'All the labours of the ages, all the devotion, all the inspiration, all the noonday brightness of human genius, are destined to extinction in the vast death of the solar system, and the whole temple of Man's achievement must inevitably be buried beneath the débris of a universe in ruins.' [25]

It is, after all, but the same problem, on the universal scale, of the death of the individual. The Christian faith is that there is an unseen but real, eternal, spiritual world ultimately independent of, however closely connected with, the seen and temporal world; if not, all human aspirations and values are but for a time, and are really names of ideals doomed in the end to be fruitless. The Christian belief does not imply a turning away from the evolutionary view of man and his nature: it rather gives it meaning, and the only permanent meaning it can have. It is required by the fact of man's present communion with God, and there is no kind of knowledge which forbids it the title of reasonable faith. Science itself, if its predictions are to be trusted, gives us contact with that strange eschatological strain in the teaching of Jesus.[26] He did not place the final consummation of 'the kingdom' on earth; and no estimation of man can be other than a vain dream which does not take into account the obvious fact that here he has no continuing city. The true valuation of the world and of human life can only be made against the background of their transience; but for the Christian they are transient not because they are to vanish as though they had never been, but because they are the transient means of attaining a greater and enduring spiritual reality.

This is the essential difference between the Christian doctrine of man and such doctrines as are implied by Naturalism and Humanism. It is a difference which there is neither value nor sense in minimizing: it is not an addition to those doctrines, but a qualitative transformation of them. It profoundly influ-

[25] *Mysticism and Logic*, p. 47 *f.*

[26] There is no reason to regard the eschatological strain as due to the disciples' misunderstanding of Jesus, or as an encumbrance of His own vision: it was rather the essential condition of the timeless and universal spirit in His teaching, and the means whereby His first followers were prevented from adapting that teaching to any other age than their own.

ences even where it well accords with what history suggests about ethics. We know too much and too little of human nature to assume that changes in morals are for the better because, from the very limited standpoint of the present, they seem to be onward steps in a line of evolutionary advance. The true character of those periods of human history which historical review pronounces retrogressive was often hid from those who lived in them. The better and the later are not interchangeable terms, and the only sure ground of confidence that there will be progress from good to better is the conviction that the whole process is guided by a Mind of intelligence and morality not Himself a product of the process. Moral standards develop; but man judges the standards, and advance is only possible because he judges and orders his life in accordance with his judgment. Within man there is that which is akin to the Mind who guides the whole. The Christian doctrine of man would therefore lay the greatest emphasis on man's need of the vision of God and of life which Jesus had. It would recognize man as indeed of the earth, earthy, yet not wholly so; and it is the qualification which is most important. Man's business is with life in the actual world in which he is set, but without a vision of his nature which transcends that life he lacks the inspiration which is necessary to find satisfying meaning either in his struggles or in his achievements.

Worldliness is the deification of the world; other-worldliness is the renunciation of it; Christianity is the transformation of it and all its values in the knowledge that it is God's.

> 'The fact of religious vision,' says Dr. Whitehead, 'and its history of persistent expansion, is our one ground for optimism. Apart from it, human life is a flash of occasional enjoyments lighting up a mass of pain and misery, a bagatelle of transient experience.'[27]

The presence or absence of belief that the vision is of Reality must inevitably determine our dealing with the moral problems of life.

[27] *Science and the Modern World*, p. 275.

# THE CHRISTIAN MORAL IDEAL: ITS NATURE AND VALIDITY.

By the Rev. F. A. M. Spencer, D.D., Chaplain of Brasenose College, Oxford.

WE must not expect to find in the Gospels clear-cut definitions of ethical truth, but may hope to discover ethical principles implied there which are susceptible of formulation in philosophical language. To begin with, what do we mean by the 'moral ideal'? Not, I think, the highest or complete ideal good, but rather the ideal of conduct or character, which is man's chief contribution to the realization of the highest or complete good—at once a means to this and, probably, an element in it. In the teaching of Jesus we do seem to find the moral ideal and the ideal good distinguished, the former being briefly indicated by the commandments to love God and man, the latter by the term 'the Kingdom of God.' The two are combined in the injunction, 'Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness,' and the relation between them is expressed in the commendation passed by Jesus on the scribe who acknowledged the supremacy of the two commandments of love, that he was not far from the Kingdom of God.

Certainly, the commandment to love God concerns religion and we are wont to distinguish religion, as man's dealing with God, from morality, as man's dealing with man and every other kind of existence. But religion falls within the scope of ethics as involving the exercise of will and being a duty. Moreover, to love God 'with all the strength' implies the devotion of the will to the fulfilment of the purposes of God, and so a morality based upon the will of God.

Let us take 'the Kingdom of God' as the term used by Jesus for the ideal good at which man is to aim. The injunction to seek the Kingdom of God suggests trying to attain something that already exists, an interpretation corroborated by the parables of the Pearl of Great Price and the Hid Treasure. But since the Kingdom of God is represented in other parables as in process of growth, it seems legitimate to conceive of it as in

measure due to the moral effort and activity of man. In any case, it is implied that man's participation in it is conditional on his search for it, and therefore the Kingdom of God, in its complete form as including human beings, can only come into being by their moral effort and activity.

What precisely the Kingdom consists in, Jesus never seems to have explained. But that it involves a life of spiritual fellowship of souls with God and with one another in an environment conducive to that life, and therefore is a state of being to which the word 'blessed' is appropriate, is hardly too much to affirm. That in the Kingdom of God the more advanced souls reach a life in which they neither die, nor are born, nor marry, was also apparently believed by Jesus. Perhaps we may regard St. Paul's phrase, 'God all in all,' as denoting the Kingdom at a more advanced stage.

Consequently the moral ideal of Jesus consists in that conduct and character which will most effectively bring into existence the Kingdom of God in its extended form as including the race of men. And this conduct and character are briefly indicated by the commandments to love God with heart and understanding and strength—that is, with the emotions, the intellect, and the will—and to love our neighbours as ourselves.

The validity of this moral ideal is obviously based upon and derived from the existence of God as Jesus conceived Him—a Supreme Being of infinite love and wisdom and power; or, if we wish to be very cautious in our statements, loving enough to will the Kingdom of God for mankind, wise enough to know how to bring it into being, powerful enough to overcome all opposition and obstacles to its realization. Love for God and man will be fully effective only if God be such as to make it fully effective. And this implies that God must help in two ways: first, in the provision of conditions of life suitable to beings actuated by love for God and for one another; secondly, in the eliciting of this love in beings who at present manifest it very imperfectly, if at all. It is in the latter aspect that the difficulty is apt to strike us the more forcibly. Granted God's power to make a perfect world, how is He to make perfect beings out of such creatures as ourselves, to inhabit it? More practically, the difficulty takes this form: Is not the command to love

intrinsically absurd? For love is nothing if not spontaneous, and if perfection, as Jesus told us, depends upon loving enemies, must it not be for ever impossible of attainment?

The answer to this riddle lies in the essential kinship of man to God. As God is love, so in the basest of human beings lies the germ, however much overlaid and smothered, of love also. When Jesus bade us love our enemies, as the condition of becoming perfect children of God, He meant that we should begin by doing the deeds of love—helping and praying for them in their troubles and difficulties—and ere long we shall begin to feel sorry for them and to pity them, and that is the beginning of love. The moral law of Christianity is perfectly obeyed only when it ceases to be law and becomes the spontaneous and eager activity of the divine in man. Moreover, love calls forth love in response, even in the selfish and hard-hearted, as when succour in adversity evokes gratitude, and gratitude expresses itself in reciprocated kindness.

In the light of the essential kinship of man to God we may rightly appraise the virtues and good deeds of those who are not Christians. Kindness and devotion to the commonweal, even among pagans and sceptics, have their value in training both those who give and those who receive, so that they will respond at some future time to the moral ideal of the Gospel.

Further, Christianity presupposes that God and man are not only akin, but also can and do come into close communion, so that man through worshipping God subjects himself to the influence of God, and that God's love for man reproduces itself in man as his love for his fellow. Still further, this influence of God upon man, moving him to realize the moral ideal, is facilitated and intensified by what is called the Atonement—that is, the conquest of supreme hatred by supreme love, the victory of the moral ideal over its opposite, in the person of One who was uniquely the Son of God.

The moral ideal of Christianity is therefore valid—that is, practicable and efficacious—on the condition that God and man and the relation between them be as Christianity declares them. It rests on this hypothesis—a hypothesis to be tested by living the Christian life.

The principle of the moral ideal of Jesus being love for God and man with a view to the Kingdom of God, what is its actual content? What conduct is thereby prescribed? Jesus did not elaborate this in detail, but indicated broadly certain directions for its application. He did this in particular with regard to the four great instincts of combativeness, acquisitiveness, sex, and self-assertion. First, love for the aggressor demands the mortification of the impulse to hit back and prompts to contending with the aggressor's malice by working on his kindly and generous feelings. Secondly, we are to make our wealth instrumental to the getting of friends, meanwhile laying up a store of wealth in a better world. Thirdly, sexuality is not to be allowed to work havoc by capricious exercise, but is to be concentrated into that burning flame that welds one man with one woman into a union of one flesh. Fourthly, we are to be yielding and self-effacing in our mutual dealings, and always to subordinate our desire for men's esteem to our desire for the honour which can only come from God. Besides all this, the moral ideal will demand continuous and arduous labour at special tasks or responsibilities for promoting the Kingdom of God, signified by Jesus by the word 'talents.' For His immediate disciples the most outstanding of such tasks was that of spreading the Gospel of the Kingdom. But I think it would be legitimate so to regard any function in society that is requisite or conducive to human welfare.

The pursuit of this moral ideal in a civilization permeated by antagonistic motives is liable to occasion opposition and therefore suffering more or less acute. Even a quiet and unostentatious, but consistent, devotion to it may arouse dislike, as constituting a protest against the wicked ways of the world. But when it incites to active interference with immoral customs and institutions, martyrdom is the natural result. Thus, when Jesus drove out the traders from the Temple, the authorities plotted His crucifixion. Self-sacrifice in some form is inevitable for those who aim persistently and whole-heartedly at the moral ideal, till such time as the world accepts it. The moral ideal appropriate while the Kingdom of God is still struggling with opposition, and the moral ideal that will be appropriate to the Kingdom of God in its victorious perfection, are essentially the

same. But its application necessarily differs somewhat with changing circumstances, though not to the extent claimed by the exponents of the *interim-ethic* theory.

Finally, the moral ideal is both individual and social. Its social character was indicated by Jesus when in the synagogue at Nazareth He announced the fulfilment of the prophecy that cruelty and slavery would cease, and when on the Mount of Olives He lamented that Jerusalem was about to choose war to its destruction instead of peace to its salvation. But He apparently worked out its social bearings less even than He did its bearings on private life—for more or less obvious reasons.

The Christian moral ideal, then, consists in love both for God and man with a view to the Kingdom of God: love for God in the form of promotion of His purposes for its coming and development, or, if the phrase be preferred, for preparing the world for its coming; love for man in the form of help to individual human beings to become fit to participate more and more richly in the Kingdom of God. These two aspects of the moral ideal are of course not independent; yet either may at any moment be more prominent than the other.

How does the Christian moral ideal stand to the moral ideals of philosophical ethics? Shall we, in Christ's name, contend with them as rivals, denouncing their superficialities and falsities? I maintain, on the contrary, that Christ does not destroy the conceptions of philosophical ethics, but fulfils them. How this is so, I hope to indicate by means of a very brief survey of certain types of ethics.

(1) First let us consider the ethics of duty, as set forth by Immanuel Kant. As Professor C. D. Broad well says, 'for Kant the notion of duty or obligation and the notions of right and wrong are fundamental.'[1] So Kant declares: 'There is an imperative which commands a certain conduct immediately, without having as its condition any other purpose to be attained by it. This imperative is categorical.' We cannot stay now to dilate on Kant's formalism and severity, so different from the gracious kindliness of Jesus, for whom it might be said that not only the Sabbath, but the moral law itself, was made for man, and not man for the moral law. Yet in emphasizing the impera-

[1] *Five Types of Ethical Theory*, p. 116.

tiveness of duty was not Kant right and in deep accord with Jesus when He bade His disciples take up their crosses, fearing not them that kill the body and after that can do no more harm? But whence does Kant derive the categorical imperative? He writes: 'Act as if the maxim of thy action were to become a universal law of nature.' Thus, if nobody paid their debts, credit would disappear; if nobody applied their talents, the needs of man would not be provided for; if nobody helped others in distress, mankind would be sunk in misery. It appears to be, in fact, the welfare and existence of humanity upon which he bases his conception of duty. But Jesus provides a yet stronger foundation for the categorical imperative, namely, the will of God to include men in the Kingdom of God. Kant is right in declaring that mere earthly happiness does not produce the imperativeness of duty, and attempts not very successfully to derive it from the nature of reason itself. But it is, if we believe Jesus, really the Kingdom of God as an ideal in the mind of God which begets in the conscience of man the imperatives, 'Thou shalt do this,' 'Thou shalt not do this,' 'Thou must carry out the task assigned to thee.' Nothing but God's ideal is mighty enough to produce the tremendous urgency of the moral law and duty. Because the Kingdom of God has to be, therefore I am obliged, cost what it may, to behave so and not otherwise, to accomplish this or the other task, to sacrifice myself to this end. My duty here and now is the reflection back into the present upon my individuality of the universal ideal for the future in the mind of God. The Kantian ethic can prove its validity only by basing itself upon the Gospel of the Kingdom.

(2) Utilitarianism—the doctrine that right and wrong mean, respectively, conducive to, and detrimental to, happiness—prides itself upon being thoroughly Christian. So John Stuart Mill: 'In the Golden Rule of Jesus of Nazareth we read the complete spirit of the ethics of utility. To do as one would be done by and to love one's neighbour as oneself constitute the ideal perfection of utilitarian morality.' It makes this claim appear more reasonable through definitely discarding, as expounded by Henry Sidgwick, the crude egoistic hedonism with which it had been involved in its infancy. By taking as the moral ideal the absolutely impartial and unselfish devotion to the

happiness of mankind—ultimately, of all conscious beings—utilitarianism displays affinities both with the teaching and with the example of Jesus—with His injunctions to be merciful and tolerant and forgiving, to minister and help and serve friend and stranger and foe, and with His own acts of curing the ailments of both body and mind. Moreover, the frequency on His lips of the words 'blessed' and 'joy' indicate that He was not prone to decry man's natural craving for happiness.

But, apart from principles of life and the Universe such as Jesus claimed to reveal, the edifice of utilitarianism is as a house built upon the sand. For the rational perception that another's happiness is of equal intrinsic value with my own, will not by itself enable me to do much to lift the load of human misery. I need also sympathy, compassion, affection—in a word, love—if I am effectively to promote the happiness of neighbour and of foe. And secondly, of what avail is it to remove certain conditions of suffering and to provide certain conditions of happiness, if there are to be sorrow and bitterness in the latter end? Unless we have a prospect of expanding resources to satisfy the expanding and soaring soul of man, endeavours to ameliorate life in the immediate future are of dubious advantage. They may do little but render man more painfully sensitive to the limitations which restrict and eventually will terminate his span of existence, both individual and racial. Only some Being such as we conceive God to be can promise us conditions of life to correspond with our hopes. And if God has made such a promise, it were well to consider it attentively, that we may prepare ourselves and one another for its fulfilment. Utilitarianism claims to teach charity, and charity is of the essence of the Christian moral ideal. But whereto will charity serve, if there be no Kingdom of God?

(3) The ethical doctrine that calls itself 'scientific' received its first notable expression at the hands of Herbert Spencer. As I interpret this thinker, he believed that moral conduct consists in the conscious and intelligent carrying on of the unconscous, or at any rate unintelligent, tendencies of natural evolution. We should endeavour to attain—largely by means of more thorough adaptation of ourselves to our environment, what he calls 'the continuous adjustment of internal relations to ex-

ternal relations'—to an ever-increasing quantity of pleasant and pain-free life. This process of adjustment goes on even apart from conscious reflection, since individuals who find pleasure in deleterious practices are at a disadvantage in the struggle for existence and so are less likely than others to propagate their kind. But rational foresight and deliberation will immensely accelerate this beneficent evolution and hasten man's progress towards the goal of complete happiness.

That the evolution of mankind, with ever-improving adaptation to the environment, should be the objective of rational and moral conduct, as well as of the unthinking processes of Nature, is no futile conception in ethics. Nor need we repudiate altogether the 'naturalism' of this type of thought, seeing that we find ourselves in a natural world and have a natural basis to our life and must come to terms with Nature somehow. But as before, it behoves us to ask what assurance a merely naturalistic ethic can afford that its objective will be reached. The spectre of pessimism is always lurking somewhere to rise up and scare us in seasons of disillusionment. Will not the further development of his personality make man more conscious of the inevitable evils of his lot? In particular, will not the necessity of death mar the happiness of the very best condition of mankind that natural evolution can produce? Professor Bergson, a naturalistic thinker of a less materialistic cast, is very bold and proclaims the hope that the *élan vital* in its victorious progress will eventually destroy its last enemy, death. But how from the standpoint even of his biological mysticism can he convince us of his prophetic inspiration?

I am prepared to maintain that the conception of evolution is not alien to the Christian world-view. Scholars have uttered warnings against interpreting the Gospel parables of growth in the modern evolutionary sense. And yet, so interpreted, they do appear to agree with the historic facts of the subsequent development of the moral and religious life of Christendom. Evolution is evidently characteristic not only of sub-human life, but also of human life, even in those later phases to which we give the name 'spiritual.' Therefore it would seem to be no bad description of the moral ideal to say that it is the conduct which best promotes the evolution of humanity in its completeness, foster-

ing especially the 'emergence' (to use a more recent evolutionary category) and the development of the spiritual element in human personality. But spiritual evolution should imply adaptation to a spiritual environment. These evolutionary ethics will pass muster only if their exponents take within their survey spiritual existence—the spiritual tendency of human progress and the spiritual environment of human life. And if they do assume a spiritual environment, they should be prepared to conceive of it too as evolving in correspondence with the evolving life of man; in other words, to postulate that God will provide the Kingdom of God for His spiritually developed children. But leave out God as the ever-active Agent in the evolution both of human beings and of their environment, and these so-called scientific ethics crumble into dust.

Herbert Spencer devoted a considerable portion of his *Data of Ethics* to the discussion of egoism and altruism, investigating their biological origin and sketching their further development and eventual synthesis. But he omitted to explain how either egoism or altruism or the two in combination can be directed towards humanity's goal, the life of rich and unalloyed happiness to which he optimistically looked forward. Nor, as he conceived the position of mankind in the Universe, is it possible so to direct them. There would always be a chasm between either a prudent concern for my own welfare, or a sympathetic interest in my neighbour's, and the idealism that aspires to a far-away utopia: a chasm to be bridged only by conceiving of myself and my neighbour as destined members of the utopia. But to do this would be to transcend the naturalistic setting of evolutionary ethics.

It has never been found very difficult to point out fallacies and inconsequences in the *Data of Ethics*, but it is doubtful whether the practical 'scientific ethics' of to-day, to which our President alluded in his address, are in much better case. These latter are professedly strongly humanitarian, and so far, we may say, Christian. But a humanitarianism that lacks any deep conviction of the intrinsic and permanent value of human personality, or of any definite support to its aims in the constitution of things, is not likely to command the allegiance of those who

feel and think most deeply, or even to continue very sure of itself.

(4) Lastly we will consider ethical idealism, which is thus defined in the *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*: 'Wherever we find the moral life regarded as working and leading man's life towards the spiritual principle underlying all reality, or wherever the source and ground of the moral life are derived from such a principle, there we have ethical idealism.' This ethical doctrine is typically represented by Thomas Hill Green, who writes of the 'self-realization or reproduction' in human individuals 'of an eternal consciousness,' to which he sometimes gives the name 'God.' This self-realization is equivalent to 'the full realization of the capabilities of the human soul.' Morality is not the whole of self-realization, but is the dominant factor in it, as he explains: 'the virtuous character is good, not as a means to a *summum bonum* other than itself, but as in principle identical with the *summum bonum*.' The moral ideal, we may interpret him to mean, is that morality which will effect the complete and satisfying good, which is 'the full realization of the capacities of the human soul.' But this self-realization can only be through a society; for the 'permanent well-being' at which the individual aims 'he necessarily presents to himself as a social well-being.'

Here at last, it might seem, we have a moral ideal implying a kinship and an intimate connection with a corresponding principle in the Universe itself, with the moral reality which is centred in God. Does not this give us what in other systems we desiderated, the secure confidence that the moral ideal will be progressively realized and transform the whole of human life, since it derives from the Eternal Fount of all reality? Its affinity with one great saying of Jesus has been remarked: 'Be ye perfect, as your Heavenly Father is perfect.' It accords also with the prevailing thought of the Gospel according to St. John, that the Christ having the life of God in Himself, came to impart to men that same life, life eternal in fellowship with Himself and with the Father and with one another, as it is written: 'I am come that they may have life and have it to the full.' 'I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be perfected into one.' The word 'perfection' has been taken as the keynote of this trend of

thought,[2] and certainly perfection is of the essence of the Christian Gospel. Is ethical idealism, then, the philosophical transcription of the moral ideal of Jesus?

In a measure, yes; but again there is something lacking. For we may ask whether we have even here the full security which we look for in the moral ideal that is to rule our lives. That the Eternal Self-Consciousness reproduces Itself—or, if we prefer, Himself—in miniature, so to speak, in human beings, is verily a captivating and uplifting thought. But can we be quite sure that It—or He—will forever maintain these identical individuals to be the organs of It's—or His—expression? If it be merely self-reproduction in finite centres that the Almighty craves for, how do we know that He will not use certain souls for a while and then transfer His attention to others? That God does everything for His own glory, and expects His creatures to co-operate with Him in this, is, I confess, not a doctrine that appeals to me.

And corresponding to this defect in the representation of God, there is a similar defect in the description of the main aim of human conduct. Self-realization is a forbidding word, and our suspicions of it are increased when we read in Professor Muirhead, who belongs more or less to the same ethical school, that 'it is only as part of my own, as in some way included in the fulfilment of my ideal of what life should be, that I can desire my neighbour's good.'[3] It seems to leave no room for genuine disinterestedness.

And, thirdly, we may justly hesitate to equate self-realization with the winning or gaining of the soul described by Jesus. As Dr. Boyd Scott puts it, 'the man described as "losing" his soul *begins* his course with another vision altogether. Confronted with what Jesus describes as "for My sake and the Gospel's," his whole interest is absorbed thereby, and interest becomes allegiance and loyalty, the whole process beginning and advancing without any deliberate invasion of it by the thought of self.'[4]

Ethical idealism sprang from the Hegelian philosophy, and the Hegelian philosophy, like the Aristotelian, arose out of the

[2] *E.g.* by Prof. J. S. Mackenzie in his *Manual of Ethics*, though he applies it also to the evolutionary school.

[3] *The Elements of Ethics*, 3rd ed., p. 170.

[4] *Christ the Wisdom of Man*, p. 201.

science of logic. To that we must very largely attribute the self-contained frigidity of this trend of thought. Ethical idealism professes to set perfection as the goal of man, but it is an egoistic perfection that the term 'self-realization' suggests. Not till the exponents of this ethical doctrine rid it of all taint of egoism will they be able to arouse a general confidence in and enthusiasm for their moral ideal. There can be no true perfection without self-forgetting love, whether in God or in His children. How indeed did Jesus tell us to become perfect? By loving, not merely those who support and contribute to our life, but also and especially those who oppose us might and main —our sworn foes and deadly enemies; such as, if we thought primarily of the realization or expansion of our own personalities, we should prefer to be rid of for ever. Only by devoting ourselves to the perfection of all will it be possible to achieve our own perfection, and this we can do only through a God who Himself wills the perfection of His children for their own sake.

Duty, charity, evolution, perfection—these noble words may fittingly be taken as giving the keynotes of certain distinctive types of ethical thought. I have striven to show that, however justifiably these several ethical schools emphasize the transcendent importance of their favourite concepts, yet they one and all fail to demonstrate them as, in the full sense, practical and reliable. For they are deficient in the insight that the full validity of these principles of conduct can be derived only from a Will, dominant in the Universe, that wills the good of the moral agents, if not of all sentient beings, in the Universe. Such a supreme Will of Love did Jesus claim to reveal, predicting and giving a name to the ideal of universal good purposed by that Will. I hope in the not very remote future to see arise a more inclusive theory of ethics, that will not destroy, but fulfil, reconciliating into one harmonious system duty and charity and evolution and perfection, and displaying each as integral to the love for God and man that seeks the Kingdom of God. When philosophical thought grasps and makes its own the moral ideal of Jesus, then we may expect a truly splendid ethic, theoretically satisfying and practically capable, in the light of which humanity will advance stage by stage upon its career of glory.

# PRINCIPLES OF SEXUAL CONDUCT

By Douglas White, M.A., M.D., Chairman of the Council of the Churchmen's Union 1923—1930.

PRINCIPLES are things of the mind. In seeking principles, we seek a self-consistent attitude of mind which takes account of all known facts, biological, psychological, historical, as well as ideals towards which the facts point; we seek to make an intelligent synthesis, which is not abhorrent to ethical and aesthetic ideals. In the region of sex, this is a complex and difficult task; if, in my attempt, I trespass on the subjects of later papers, I trust that such trespass will be forgiven.

Human society is built on a sexual basis; the structures which different nations have reared on that basis vary widely, and the concepts of every nation—nay, of every individual—are rooted in the ancestral inheritance of ideas; these ideas are modified, enlarged, and refined by the thought-processes, social, ethical and scientific, of each generation. But validity of thought depends on appreciation of fact; vacuous speculation cannot reach valid conclusions.

First, then, as to the facts. I would remind you that knowledge of matters sexual, whether physiological, psychological, pathological or statistical, is of very recent acquisition. I regard James Hinton as the first prophet of sex in this country; he died in 1875. Since then knowledge has been extended in all the spheres mentioned, and is growing rapidly at the present moment; anthropology is adding its important contribution. Such gain in knowledge implies at least critical examination of concepts formed in ignorance, and may involve their obsolescence. If you dare to think, you must take the consequences, be they what they may.

First, then, I wish to speak of the ratio of the sexes. That sounds academic; but it is fundamental, for on it depends the reasonableness of monogamy. As A. S. Parkes says, in an illuminating paper,[1] 'If one sex or the other begun to be pro-

[1] *Eugenics Review*, January 1926, pp. 275-293.

duced in overwhelming numbers, the principle of monogamous marriage would have to be modified.' In fact, all the accredited figures do not show a divergence between males and females at birth of more than about 10 per cent. anywhere; in this country the average stands at about 104 males to 100 female children. Till recently it was thought that the sex of an infant depended upon its nutrition in embryo; now it is practically certain that sex is determined at fertilization, the father sperm fixing the sex of the future child, one way or the other. But the chances are not equal; in every nation it seems clear that a larger number of males are conceived than of females This excess of males at conception is placed at about 12 per cent., though not necessarily uniform for all races. But the male embryo is everywhere a frailer creature than the female, increasingly so towards the beginning of foetal life, so that in England, by the time of birth, the male excess is reduced to 4 per cent. This relative delicacy continues, with one slight exception—the period of puberty—throughout life, but is most important during the first year of life. Until 1900, the excess male infant mortality was over 20 per cent., which practically meant the equalization of the sexes at the end of the first year of life. Now from the *national* point of view, I do not see that infant mortality matters very much except for its effect on the balance of the sexes; but if monogamy is to prevail, as the norm of sex-relations, it is obviously important that the sexes should be very nearly equal in numbers when they arrive at maturity. And this point is reached, in conditions of civilization, where reasonable care is taken of embryo and infant life. In the last thirty years, infant mortality has been reduced from 150 to 70 per 1,000, and this figure might again be halved, though the relative male mortality would rise slightly. The result would be—and will be shortly—an equality of numbers at maturity, or even a slight male excess. Hence, for a well-civilized community (ours is hardly yet so), monogamy seems the natural form for sex-relations to take, the alternative being some sort of sexual anarchy. Where women have largely preponderated (as they do where infant life is neglected) some form of aristocratic polygyny has prevailed, so as to absorb the female excess; and this is doubtless the least harmful convention, in places where it is considered disgraceful not to be married; for

in such communities prostitution is the only alternative. (We need not consider polyandry here; for polyandry implies a considerable excess of males, a condition which appears impossible in any settled community, apart from either a prevalence of female infanticide, or the removal of a large proportion of women by capture in war.) My point is, that apart from artificial causes (such as war, or an excessive emigration of males), the processes of nature, under conditions of civilization, make for an equality of males and females at the age of maturity. If this be so, then monogamy seems the only rule for a civilized community which seeks to regulate by law sex and family relations.

Incidentally also this equality of numbers postulates (so it seems to me) a single standard of sexual ethic for men and women. Up to the present century, a dual standard of sex-ethic has prevailed, greater latitude being allowed to men than to women, both before and after marriage. This dual standard has for long sought justification on the ground of greater urgency of the sexual impulse in the male. This plea is advanced by the male; but now that women's tongues are untied—I mean of course on *this* subject—we find them saying that the female impulse is just as strong. Here dogmatism is misplaced; no man or woman has the means of such quantitative comparison; but it is clear that an equality of numbers demands in a well-regulated society a corresponding control of impulse by both male and female. But it must be clearly remembered that the presumed equality of numbers does not determine what the single standard shall be, either before or after marriage, any more than it determines to what extent the monogamy shall be permanent. It remains for the future generation to determine whether their young men shall rise to the standard which has been expected of women, or whether women shall accommodate themselves to the standard which they have expected of the men. One or the other seems inevitable; if the former is to be realized, this would imply for men a more powerful control over their sexual impulses than they have hitherto exercised.

I will now pass to another aspect, namely, the manner in which we think of sex-relations in general; for this too is of fundamental importance. The attitude of West and East is different. With Easterns generally the fullest and most passion-

ite achievement of sexual relations is deemed natural, right, and n no way ethically objectionable, so long as exercised within prescribed limits; yet here also we find a high value and esteem set upon the more lasting love-relationship; the Taj-mahal, for example, is a beautiful witness of the lasting love of Shah Jehan for his favourite wife; such examples show that Eastern ideals are not so far distant from our own as the generally accepted practices might seem to imply; our own practices do not conform to our professed ideals. But in the East generally there is nothing inherently shameful in the sexual act. The Western outlook, largely moulded by traditional Christianity, is very different. From early Christian times, beginning, in my belief, with St. Paul, all sex-relations have been regarded in the light of a permissible evil.[2]

This, so far as we can see, is quite definitely not the teaching of Christ, but of His followers—a vital distinction in framing estimates of 'Christian' teaching. In the first century and later, the sexual profligacy of the Roman Empire may well have given colour to this view, so that all sex-relations came to be regarded as concessions to the depravity of human nature. When asceticism began to flourish, the very name of woman became a synonym for ignominy; woman was even regarded as a sewer, and all passional feelings towards them as evil concupiscence. This terrible distortion, of course, no longer prevails. Love between man and woman is properly regarded as a beautiful thing —the most beautiful of life. But the fulfilment of that love in passional sex-relation is still apt to be regarded as necessarily tainted with evil. Boys and girls—specially girls—in good families are brought up in would-be ignorance of sexual functions, and taught to regard every manifestation of bodily sex impulse as nasty and reprehensible. This attitude is deplorable

[2] I do not think S. Paul can be absolved from some responsibility for this view. His commendation of virginity is undoubted, though possibly as an interimsethic; the oft-quoted 'better to marry than to burn' is a highly-coloured, but not therefore unfair example of his attitude. If the Ephesian epistle is genuine, the concept of the Church, as Christ's bride, certainly implies a higher view, but also a radical change of outlook, quite incompatible with the grudging permissiveness of the earlier writing. The earlier teaching dominated the popular conception; the later formed a basis for the esoteric sacramental doctrine of marriage. On the other hand, Ep. Hebrews clearly states that the marriage-bed is free from defilement.

in its results. In brides it produces an artificial sexual frigidity, so that sexual communion, which ought to be accomplished with a glowing passional satisfaction to both partners, becomes a frigid submission on the woman's part, with disappointment to the man. Too often marriages of great promise are wrecked by the early conduct of sex-intercourse, whether due to the stupidity and ignorance of the man or the false modesty of the woman. Mutual satisfaction in bodily communion is an essential feature of a truly successful marriage. The man or woman who regards the sexual act as inherently dirty, mean or degraded, understands nothing of human love.

Sexual communion is or ought to be the greatest natural sacrament of life—the outward and palpable manifestation of an inward and spiritual love. If it be so, then sex is capable of absorption into the spiritual realm; we are relieved of the ultimate dualism between flesh and spirit, and the way is open to feel that we *can* be children of God, sex and all.

I have not been able to grasp in what other sense marriage can be called a sacrament. The ecclesiastical sense, from Augustin onwards, seems to be based on a supposed metaphysical union of personalities, on which is founded the doctrine of indissolubility. Psychologically this seems untenable. As a specifically Christian sacrament, it lacks Dominical institution; Christ did not institute marriage; He raised its level. Peter's wife remained Peter's wife without added sanction. The same principle held good as other countries became Christianized. But as the true sacrament of love, marriage stands unique; through it the spiritual communion between man and woman sweeps into its grasp not only the mental and emotional aspects of their natures, but the full corporeal and sensorial too, reaching to the very roots, as it were, of humanity, deep down in mother-earth. Not without such truly sacramental union can the love of man and woman attain its full joy and peace; it amplifies, deepens and interprets the spiritual unity. Not the sensuous apart from the spiritual, nor the spiritual without the sensuous, but both together, whereby two complete natures may be adapted into a deep and fundamental sympathy. On the other hand, apart from the spiritual element, sex-experience has no sacramental value at all. 'Sex-union without love,' said James Hin-

ton, ' is a blasting of life's forces, not a mingling of them.' These words are poetic in form, but they express a universal truth; they hold both in and out of marriage. Sexual intimacy resulting from merely physical attraction is doubly unsatisfactory. First, it is, by general consent, transitory and unstable; repetition brings, not satisfaction, but satiety. Secondly, it tends to isolate, for both sexes, the higher from the humbler parts of their nature, and by giving rein to the humbler, starves the higher. The disastrous effect of licentiousness carves itself on the very features of its victims; it destroys his or her capacity for the fuller and higher satisfaction of an all-embracing love. The only true solution lies in the complete involvement in love of both the physical and spiritual moieties of each personality, supplying both endurance and intensity.

I think this general ideal would be agreed by most thoughtful people, even by those who feel that monogamy supplies an insufficient outlet to the sexual urge; but the mere statement of the ideal is too vague to be practically helpful. The difficulties are great on each side. In preparation for marriage, the physiological side is usually wholly neglected, or taken for granted. We have no system of initiation; its place can only be taken by plain-spoken literature by accredited authors. It is true that if sex-intercourse proves impossible, the law provides for annulment; but in very many cases there is a psycho-physiological inadaptability which, though giving no ground for annulment, effectually spoils and stunts marital happiness.

The problem of mental and spiritual compatibility is at least as difficult. The first requisite is a substantially similar outlook on life. Mixed marriages between persons of different races or nations involve considerable risk of incompatibility; even within the same nation, great difference of early environment and education does not promise well. On the other hand, neither man nor woman should seek for similarity; what is wanted is complementariness, so that the defects of each are compensated. Partners need a generally similar outlook, with different but converging interests.

Whatever advice we may offer, it is all but impossible for young men and women to form anything like dispassionate judgment on a matter where passion both is and ought to be the

predominant factor. Lovers wear rose-tinted glasses; the tint is apt to fade in the weather-stresses of life. The result is, in many cases unhappy, and, in many more, tolerable marriages. There is also another element of uncertainty, too often disregarded. For real changes take place in both men and women. Long after a man has reached physical maturity, his mind develops, specially where there is a high degree of culture; his opinions alter, his tastes change. The changes in woman are far greater. The processes of pregnancy, maternity, suckling, involve profound changes in her outlook. These changes are in the main due to the re-proportioning of internal secretions; they modify the temperament greatly, often for the better, but often, too, for the worse. Unpromising marriages may turn out almost ideal; promising ones the reverse. By following sound principles we may lay the foundations of happiness, but we cannot, like the architect, draw an accurate picture of the structure to be reared on it. There are always surprises in store; some happy, some not.

Thus the possible need of divorce comes into the picture. Some Churchmen consider divorce specifically forbidden by the reported words of Jesus; some (including myself) find only the laying down of a principle, an ideal. Having now spoken of our Lord, I must not refrain from saying about Him a word which, I think, should be said. Every normal man has from time to time experience of powerful sexual attractions. If Jesus were perfect man, then this impulse must have been shared by Him with the rest of humanity. How can He have been tempted in all points like as we are if He was immune from those physical attractions which form for normal man the most poignant trials of life? His was a personality which proved singularly attractive to women; they loved Him, and He befriended even harlots. He always used his power over them for raising them to a higher life. But His respect for women did not arise from lack of virility, but from the constant refusal to allow his bodily faculties to get loose from spiritual control. The picture of Christ as a painted-window saint is happily obsolete: a sexless dreamer never caused a revolution in religion or anything else. Moreover, if Christ had been immune from the sexual urge, His opinions and judgments on sexual matters could not carry weight, being out of touch with human trial and experience.

If we may assume, therefore, with, as I think, the majority of competent critics, that the words in the Gospels are not legislative injunctions but enunciations of the ideal, then both Church and State are left free to legislate towards that ideal in accordance with the changing circumstances of society. St. Paul assumed that right[3]; and the Church has done so too: for divorce *a mensâ et toro* was certainly not present to the mind of Christ. The main objection to divorce *a vinculo* (that is, with power to remarry) is that it breaks up the family and is bad for the children. In fact, to-day in this country the children practically always form a bond of union which holds the parents together in spite of even serious difficulties. Where these are so great as to lead to the Courts, if the case is defended it is almost always in order to secure custody of the children; the children's interest is uppermost in the minds of the parents as well as of the State. In at least very many of such cases—probably each of you can think of cases to the point—divorce of parents is to the children's advantage. But if the family unit is broken by divorce, it is worse broken by permanent judicial separation, to which opponents of divorce have no objection. To my mind, this solution (the equivalent of divorce *a mensâ et toro*) is the most immoral and demoralizing invention. It breaks up the family and at the same time renders impossible a new synthesis. Talk of the sanctity of marriage! The fact that Church or State sanctions a marriage does not give it any sanctity; the sanction of Church or State cannot make a marriage other than it is. The only sanctity of the marriage relation is that it represents the highest love of which the parties are capable. The real sanctity of marriage is best secured by putting an end to marriages that are a disgrace to the name. That persons who hate or despise each other should be condemned to live together and submit to sexual relations is immoral; that they should be called married when the marriage in fact no longer exists, is a farce. To-day the conscience of sound-thinking men and women is awake to these facts. One further point; up to the present divorce has been regarded as the penalty for quasi-criminal conduct (adultery being an ecclesiastical crime); we talk of the guilty and innocent

[3] I *Cor.* vii, 15.

parties[4]; divorce ought to be regarded definitely not as a penalty incurred by one party, but as a relief for the other, or indeed for both. Looked on this way, relief should be given for all conditions which make married life either non-existent or intolerable. Divorce would then become a method, not of breaking up of families, but of mending broken lives.

Herein also I wish strongly to deprecate the idea that Church and State should have different rules; both State and Church seek to secure the stability of marriage; but they seek the same goal by different roads. The question is, Are we going to encourage a lasting but terminable reality,or are we to insist on an interminable sham? Our answer will depend on how much we are prepared to trust human nature. Monogamy, after all, is the result, not the cause, of human love; as Westermarck says, so long as men and women love they will desire monogamy. Should they cease to do so (he wisely adds) no laws in the world could save marriage from destruction.

No paper on this general subject, however cursory, could pretend to cover its ground if it failed to take account of prostitution. Prostitution has accompanied marriage since the early days of civilization. The idea that legal indissolubility of marriage favours good sexual morality is false. In mediaeval Europe the indissolubility of marriage was fully accepted; at the same time we find conditions of social morality more depraved and profligate than at any time since the Roman decline. Morals, says Havelock Ellis, is how we live, not how we legislate. I want to ask you, as he does, in all seriousness, What is the relation of marriage to prostitution? That the relation is a close one, no one can doubt. The nature of that relationship has been variously stated. At least from the fourth century to the nineteenth it was held with practical unanimity by both Churchmen and Statesmen that prostitution was a necessary defence of marriage. This view was put quite bluntly by Augustin, and later by Aquinas; in a more rhetorical form by the historian Lecky. Havelock Ellis regards the relation in a different light

[4] In our law-courts the distinction, in the majority of undefended cases, is purely technical; adultery, as a learned Judge said recently, is the gateway to divorce; the man usually takes the necessary step, either actually or nominally.

both marriage and prostitution he regards as part and parcel of one system.

These views may shock the sensibilities of some of you; in whatever light you look at them, the two systems are not independent. Prostitution is clearly a great evil; in mediaeval times it was sought to be controlled in the interest of public order; in the last century for the sake of public health. On the Continent, therefore, it was regulated—and still is in France and elsewhere—by being licensed. In my college days it was widely urged that such regulation should be adopted in this country as the only straight-forward method; but since the Brussels Conference of 1899, regulation has been discredited, since there is more disease in regulated countries than in unregulated. Moreover, the licensing of prostitutes and brothels has now been shown to be the main support of the international traffic in women. I do not know of any reputable authority now in favour of it.

There is no more pitiable fate than that of prostitutes; they exist in response to the demand of men for that sort of satisfaction; men use them and despise them, but seem to remain unconscious that they are themselves responsible for the existence of the evil. Fortunately to-day in this country, regular prostitution is tending to pass into disuse; all but the lowest class of men and women have come to feel that such sex-relations, having no spiritual component, are beneath the level of human dignity. But temporary affectional liaisons are tending to take the place of prostitution. Those acquainted with the terrible evils of prostitution will, I think, consider even this a change for the better; but it is far beneath the dignity of a lasting and acknowledged relation, so terribly is it to the cost of the woman, both in character and reputation. Love worth the name must be unselfish in all things, and must never expose its object to contumely, disgrace, or loss of self-respect. Selfishness is the great enemy; as à Kempis says, 'In whatsoever instance a man seeketh himself, there he falleth from love.'

A Christian community must desire that marriage, as permanent as possible, should be the effective norm of sex-relationship; but it cannot merely proclaim an abstract dogma and close its eyes to the concrete existence, more or less general, of other

less elevated forms of cohabitation for which the dogma itself may be in part responsible. We cannot hope to eliminate the lower forms entirely; every normal person knows something of the force of the sexual urge, under severe erotic stimulus. It seems to me that the relation between what is called love and lust, is not so much a relation between two external systems, as between two tendencies inherent not only in nations or in social groups, but in every individual; the one to follow the course of self-abnegation, not for the sake of asceticism, but in order to attain love's higher values; the other to succumb to the lure of what we may call the ancestral orgy—that form of occasional uncontrolled sexual license which certainly prevailed in the earlier days of humanity. We cannot root out the latter, but we can strive to suppress it by intelligent effort; only by doing so can men and women attain the higher values of an all-embracing love in which there is no shame and whose value endures.

Chastity does not consist in a merely negative attitude to sex-manifestations, but in the positive direction of the sexual life. Our vocabulary is so misleading. We talk of men and women remaining chaste till marriage. Does not that imply that the sex-relation after marriage is unchaste? It is a point worthy of thought, for it implies a radically false outlook.

Without doubt the married state represents the normal development of life both for men and women. Failure to reach a satisfactory marriage certainly entails a loss to normal men, and a still greater loss to normal women. For some men, and for a few women, that loss may be partly compensated by diversion and expansion along other lines. Temperaments vary widely, as does the strength of the sexual impulse. Pronounced vocations are calls which drive men and women off nature's main line on to side lines; for these the suppression of the sex instinct is in accord with their vocation, but not for the great majority.

Lastly, a few words on the general question whether sex intercourse, even in marriage, is desirable or even permissible apart from the intention of procreation. We know that procreation is the natural sequel to intercourse; has it any justification or value apart from procreation? can the two be envisaged as having separate and independent values? I am driven to the view that their values are separable and to a large degree inde-

pendent. Procreation is a sequel rather than a purpose, though it may be both. When a man and a woman marry, they do so with the purpose of living a united life at all levels—spiritual and physical. To deny them physical union except for the deliberate purpose of procreation[5] is flatly contrary to human nature, whether at its highest development or its humblest origin. It is now certain, not only from the logic of evolution, but from actual evidence of existing backward peoples, that in the earlier days of humanity the causation of pregnancy by sex-intercourse was unknown. Even to-day, by certain islanders, such causation is discredited even to ridicule. To primitive man, therefore, the union of the sexes appeared as a normal means of mutual satisfaction; pregnancy was the result of spirit-agencies—a belief which probably formed the basis of totemism. If the instinctive physiological act had a value for our early ancestors, as undoubtedly it had, in strengthening and perpetuating the affectional union of man and woman, it is difficult to see how or why this value should disappear owing to the discovery of the cause of parenthood. That the value should be transformed and reinterpreted is natural enough, but it has not been lost, as can be well attested to-day by every marriage which even glimpses the ideal. The ideal condition of a happy and at the same time a reasonably fertile marriage (and this latter must vary with social and economic conditions) is that there should be, at intervals suited to the mutual satisfaction and health of the pair, a wide latitude for sexual relations with deliberate choice of times at which it is desired that intimacy should result in childbearing, and with a full sense of responsibility for the choice. That is an expression of my deliberate opinion.

As to the methods of regulating conception, those at present in use are crude, inaesthetic, and unworthy of the dignified epithet 'scientific.' Whether they are physiologically harmful to the users is a debated question. Certainly they may lead to a laxity of sexual ethic; but *abusus non tollit usum*; their misuse does not destroy their proper value. In any case we have to face facts. Unwanted children, whether in or out of marriage, are undesirable products, misfortunes alike to themselves and their parents. Irresponsible parenthood is disastrous; responsible

[5] Cf. I *Cor.* vii, 5.

parenthood ought to consider both the spacing of children and the economics of the family. That is in the main the case for birth-control. It has already, and must have, its place in determining the future of the family and nation, in spite of its dangers. On the other hand we may rightly protest against the attempts which are being made to build a new philosophy of sex on a foundation of rubber pessaries and chemical jelloids. A true philosophy of sex can only be built, as Lippmann says, on the broad base of human nature, to which all means of regulation are incidental.

I have tried to speak on these various points plainly yet Christianly. To some it will seem that I have done neither. I am convinced that it would be the desire of Christ that men and women should have life and abundance; not a life of negations and verbotens, but the full, free yet controlled exercise of all the great and delicate faculties, bodily, mental and spiritual, with which human life is endowed. Only let it be our care that we seek a higher, not a lower, interpretation of the human potentialities of love, passion, chastity, and selfless devotion, which constitute both for men and women the strongest and, if rightly directed, the highest motives of human conduct.

# CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE IN IDEA AND HISTORY

By the Rev. H. D. A. Major, D.D., F.S.A., Principal of Ripon Hall, Oxford.

## I.

### Christ's Teaching on Marriage and Divorce.

CHRIST'S teaching on marriage and divorce is very limited in quantity: occasional and unsystematic in form: and conflicting in the reports preserved of it in the Canonical Gospels. Nevertheless it is highly significant.

In our oldest Gospel, St. Mark records (x, 1-9) that in the latter period of His ministry the Pharisees came to Christ and formally and publicly demanded His view on the question of legality of divorce. They put to Him the question: 'Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?' Jesus asks them: 'What did Moses command you?' They reply citing the Deuteronomic Code (xxiv, 3) that Moses gave permission to write a deed of divorcement (literally 'cutting off') and to divorce her. Jesus retorts: 'For the hardness of your hearts he wrote you this commandment, but (referring to the *Genesis* account of Creation) from the beginning it was not so, for when God created man, He made them male and female. Therefore shall a man leave his father and mother and cleave unto his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh. Those, therefore, whom God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.'

St. Matthew's Gospel, written some twenty-five years later, relates this incident, but in a somewhat different form. It makes the Pharisees ask Jesus, not, 'Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?' but, 'Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife *for every cause*?'

All Jews recognized that it was lawful for a man to divorce his wife: the law of Moses, which was for them the law of God, sanctioned this: but it was hotly debated among them as to what causes permitted divorce. The school of Rabbi Hillel said a man might divorce his wife for any cause, *e.g.* if she were a bad

cook. The school of Rabbi Shammai said, that only for unchastity might she be divorced. Hence in Matthew's Gospel, Jesus is required to decide between the two schools.

And He decided in favour of the school of Shammai, and says:

> 'Whosoever shall divorce his wife *except for unchastity*[1] and shall marry another *commits adultery*' (*Matt.* xix, 3-9).

This verdict agrees with Christ's words as recorded by Matthew in the Sermon on the Mount (v, 32):

> 'I say unto you, everyone divorcing his wife, *except for unchastity*, makes her commit adultery, and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced commits adultery.'

It is important to decide, if possible, which account of Christ's teaching is correct. Dr. Charles, for whom I have the profoundest respect, is quite sure that Matthew's account is correct. Mark's account he regards as unhistorical, false, and incredible. No sane and self-respecting Jew, he asserts, could ask Jesus whether a man could divorce his wife.

I agree with the contention that no Jew could ask this question seriously. But the Pharisees did not ask it seriously. It is expressly said, both in Mark and Matthew, that they were *tempting* Jesus, *i.e.* trying to entrap him. Both Rabbi Hillel and Rabbi Shammai were highly respectable and orthodox: both acknowledged the binding authority of the Mosaic Law literally interpreted: but they differed about the exact significance of a phrase in that law ('the nakedness of a thing' is its literal rendering), and this led to their conflicting decisions.

But with Jesus it was otherwise. He was deeply suspected of setting Himself above Moses. It was believed he was undermining and overthrowing the Mosaic law. He had dared to say: 'It was said to them of old . . . but I say unto you' (*Matt.* v, *passim*). He had presumed to say: 'The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath: therefore the son of man is lord of the Sabbath' (*Mark* ii, 28). He had asserted authoritatively that what came out of man's heart defiled him, not that which entered into his stomach, thus abolishing the legal distinction between clean and unclean foods (*Mark* vii, 1-28). Did

[1] *πορνεία.* This word Dr. Charles shows, in an erudite dissertation, in his *Teaching of the New Testament on Divorce* (pp. 99-109) is a generic term for sexual vice, and is used for six varieties of such.

He dare to set at defiance the law of Moses by denying the right of a man to divorce his wife? It was indeed rumoured that He dared to do so.

The Pharisees were resolved to get Him to assert it publicly, so that they could ruin Him. This adequately explains the form of the question as we have it in *Mark*. The Pharisees put the question with confidence, but Jesus, with characteristic combination of moral courage and dialectical subtlety, defeated them. He set *Genesis* against *Deuteronomy*, and found a specious reason for subordinating the permission to divorce given in *Deuteronomy* to the declaration in *Genesis* that man and wife are indissolubly united by God.

It was plain that Jesus was against divorce. He did not regard it as in accordance with the divine will. Yet He had not publicly set the law of Moses at defiance. For *Genesis* was as much a part of that law as was *Deuteronomy*, and He acknowledged the authority of *Genesis* on this point.

The superior accuracy of Mark's account over Matthew's would seem to be supported by *Luke* xvi, 18, the only passage in which Luke cites our Lord's teaching on the subject. It runs thus:

> 'Whoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from her husband, committeth adultery.'

Luke omits Matthew's limiting clause, *except for unchastity*, and gives our Lord's teaching in Mark's absolute form.

Moreover, St. Paul's words, in which he appeals in I *Cor.* vii, 10-11, to our Lord's express authority, support Mark's form of the dialogue with the Pharisees.

> 'But unto the married I give charge, yet not I but the Lord, that the wife do not desert her husband, and that the husband do not divorce his wife' (Cf. *Rom.* vii, 3, and *Ephes.* v, 31).

Why is it that within this period of a generation or so we have this difference arising between Mark's and Matthew's accounts of Christ's teaching about marriage and divorce?

It is due to the fact that it seemed quite impossible in Jewish-Christian circles to obey Christ's teaching in the absolute form in which it is recorded in Mark. Actual infidelity or unchastity on the wife's part seemed to demand divorce in the interests of

the family: and so Christ's declaration was interpreted as admitting this exception to His ideal.

We have something very similar happening in St. Paul's teaching about divorce. He, as we have seen, acknowledged the authority of Christ's declaration, but in his apostolic administration he found himself faced with a marriage problem, of which Christ's declaration did not seem to take cognisance.

Two pagans are married: one of them becomes a Christian and the pagan partner, on account of this, deserts or refuses to live with the Christian. What is to be done in such a case? St. Paul decides that the Christian partner is thereby liberated.[2]

St. Paul's decision undoubtedly means that the Christian partner may regard himself or herself as divorced, with the right to marry someone else if they will. The divorce is *a vinculo matrimonii*, not merely a legal separation *a mensa et thoro*. Undoubtedly such a fresh marriage must be 'in the Lord.' He or she must marry a Christian (I *Cor.* vii, 11-16, 39; I *Cor.* vi, 14 foll; I *Thess.* iv, 2 ff).

It is very important to notice that within the period in which the New Testament was written we have the Christian conscience admitting two practical limitations of Christ's ideal of marriage as indissoluble.

In the Fourth Gospel (viii, 3-11) there is a very remarkable story of another attempt of the Jewish scribes to entrap Jesus over the case of a woman taken in adultery. All critics of the Gospels are convinced that the narrative was not written by the author of the Fourth Gospel, but is an interpolation. How the narrative got into this Gospel is a mystery. That there is good reason for regarding it as an authentic incident in the ministry of Jesus is generally admitted. The narrative is as follows:

> And the scribes and the Pharisees bring a woman taken in adultery: and having set her in the midst they say unto Him, Master, this woman hath been taken in adultery in the very act. Now in the law Moses commanded us to stone such: what then sayest thou of her? And this they said tempting Him, that they might have whereof to accuse Him. But Jesus stooped down, and with His finger wrote on the ground. But when they continued asking Him, He lifted up Himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin amongst you, let him first cast a stone at her. And again He stooped down and with His finger wrote upon the ground.

[2] οὐ δεδούλωται, the perfect of a fixed condition.

> And they, when they heard it, went out one by one, beginning from the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone and the woman, where she was, in the midst. And Jesus lifted up Himself and said unto her: Woman, where are they? did no man condemn thee? And she said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said: Neither do I condemn thee: go thy way: from henceforth sin no more.

The law of Moses (*Deut.* xxii, 22; *Lev.* xx, 10) prescribed the death-penalty for both adulterers and adulteresses. At a later period this penalty was not enforced. Jesus delivers the woman from death, and bids her sin no more.

There are three other passages in the Gospels that we may not pass over.

(1) St. Mark, after his account of the dialogue of the Pharisees with Jesus about divorce, writes:

> 'And in the house his disciples asked Him again of the same matter. And He saith unto them: Whosoever shall divorce his wife and marry another, committeth adultery against her. And if a woman shall divorce her husband and be married to another, she committeth adultery' (*Mark* x, 10-12).

Dr. Charles regards this narrative as unhistorical. He does not believe that Jesus ever said the words attributed to Him here. Dr. Charles' main reason for his view is that in Judaism no woman could *divorce* her husband. She could *desert* him, but she could not *divorce* him. Mark's Gospel was written in Rome and for Roman Christians, according to a very widely accepted tradition, and this statement about wives divorcing their husbands is based upon a practice common enough in Rome, where a Roman satirist says that the years of Roman ladies might be reckoned by the number of their husbands. The Christian conscience in Rome condemned such conduct on the part of women, although Christ Himself had not explicitly condemned it, yet He had done so by implication. Hence this further statement is attributed to Him.

I agree entirely with Dr. Charles in rejecting this passage as unhistorical, not only for the reasons he gives, but also for another. A critical study of the Synoptic Gospels has led me to view all examples in them of private explanatory and supplementary teaching attributed to Jesus as belonging to secondary sources of very little historical value, and so as not constituting a part of the primary Gospel. It was a very natural device to try and give authority to such teaching by asserting

that it was said by Christ afterwards in private to the disciples in explanation of or in order to supplement something said by Him in public.

(2) The second passage that I must refer to is *Mt.* xix, 10-12.

> 'His disciples said unto Him: If the case of a man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry?'

They mean, I think, that if divorce may only take place for a wife's unchastity, the risk of marrying is too great. They voice the protest of the Hillelite Jewish Christian.

Jesus answers that marriage is not for all men. Physical reasons will prevent some men from marrying. Spiritual reasons will prevent others. This teaching, which is addressed privately to the disciples, I regard as in the same class as the passage just considered from Mark. We can feel no assurance that it represents the actual teaching of Jesus. It is early Christian reflection on and interpretation of Christ's great declaration about marriage and divorce.

(3) The third passage is from the Sermon on the Mount (*Mt.* v, 27).

> 'Ye have heard that it was said by them of old: Thou shalt not commit adultery. But I say unto you, that every man who looks on a woman (it may mean the wife of another) to lust after her, has already committed adultery with her in his heart.'

This saying is undoubtedly authentic.

What then is the teaching of Jesus about marriage and divorce? To realize the significance of that teaching we must see it against the background of His age and country.

(1) What is clear in these narratives is that Jesus appears as the champion of woman. The Jewish law of that day was singularly unjust and cruel to woman. In the spirit of the prophet Malachi, who, in the name of Jehovah, said: 'I hate divorcing and him that hath dealt treacherously against the wife of his youth when she has become old' (*Malachi* ii, 13-16), Jesus declares that the divine ideal for the union of the sexes prohibits such a putting asunder.

It is not divorce of every kind, but the right of men compulsorily to divorce their wives and marry other women, which Jesus declares to be especially contrary to the Divine Will. Such a practice was due to the hardness of men's hearts.

(2) The second thing that stands out is the compassion of Jesus in the case of women guilty of unchastity. He does not condone the sin, but He will not condemn the sinner. 'Neither do I condemn thee: go, sin no more' is His parting adjuration. This attitude of His towards women, who were conspicuous sinners in this way, is not only chivalrous, inconceivably chivalrous for that age and people, but also in extraordinary contrast to the prevailing attitude of His religious contemporaries. No condemnation by such was too harsh or contemptuous for the adulteress and the prostitute.

The Jewish scholar, Dr. Claude Montefiore, in his latest volume, *Rabbinic Literature and Gospel Teaching*, commenting on *Matthew* v, 31, 32, writes:

> 'In these verses the originality of Jesus is made manifest. So far, in the Sermon on the Mount, we have found nothing which goes beyond Rabbinic religion and Rabbinic morality, or which greatly differs from them. Here we do. The attitude of Jesus towards women is very striking. He breaks through Oriental limitations in more directions than one. For (1) He associates with, and is much looked after by, women in a manner which was unusual: (2) He is more strict about divorce: (3) He is also more merciful and compassionate. He is a great champion of womanhood. And in this combination of freedom and pity, as well as in His strict attitude to divorce, he makes a new departure of enormous significance and importance. If He had done no more than this, He might justly be regarded as one of the great teachers of the world.'

This is well and truly said.

(3) It should also be noted that this gentleness of Jesus to sinful women is in very marked contrast to the strength of His condemnation of the spiritual sins of arrogance, hypocrisy, hardness of heart, as exhibited by contemporary religious teachers and leaders. He does not seem to regard the sinner against purity as being as sinful as he who sinned against love and truth.

(4) Legal separation of husband and wife *a mensa et thoro* is, as Dr. George Salmon points out in his *Human Element in the Gospels* (p. 392) as contrary to Christ's ideal of marriage as the divorce *a vinculo matrimonii*. It sanctions legally the failure of the married partners to live together in mutual love as they are bound to do who have been united by God.

(5) In His teaching about marriage, as about other matters, Christ is seen, not as the great Legislator, but as the great

Liberator of men from legalism. It was in this light that St. Paul, the pupil of the Rabbis, saw Him when he wrote to the Galatians: 'With freedom did Christ set us free.' Jesus re-interpreted existing laws in the light, on the one hand, of the highest moral and spiritual principles, and, on the other hand, in the light of human needs. He stood for equity, not legality: and He put obedience to moral and spiritual principles in the place of obedience to legal codes. He substituted the freedom of the spirit for servility to the letter of Scripture.

It follows, therefore, that to appeal to Christ's enunciation of moral and spiritual ideals as if they were legal enactments is to misuse them. When He makes the man who conceived a sensual thought guilty of adultery, He is speaking not as a legislator, but as a moralist, a prophetic teacher. To insist that the Christian Church, and still more the Christian State, must legislate in accordance with the letter of His teaching is not to act in accordance with the spirit of Jesus. Such a policy lands the Church in hopeless inconsistency. For instance, Jesus said: 'Lay not up for yourselves treasure upon earth.' Must the Christian State then prohibit the acquisition of wealth, and must the Christian Church exclude from its communion all depositors in savings' banks? Jesus said: 'If a man (meaning an official) compel you by way of forced service to go with him one mile, go with him twain.' Shall then the Church insist that its members must not claim civil rights and that it is sinful to create and defend them? Jesus said: 'If a man take away thy cloak, give him thy tunic also.' Must the Church insist on the duty of giving up one's possessions at the demand of anyone who chooses to make it, and that the Christian State must sanction such procedure?

If we take this line, we shall at least be consistent, though we may be absurd. But to take Christ's teaching about marriage and divorce and to insist on its being made the law, both of the Church and the Christian State, and to do it only in this matter, and not to press for the legal enforcement of Christian teaching in these other cases, is a gross inconsistency, verging on hypocrisy.

Christ liberated the Christian man's rational, moral, and spiritual consciousness from the irrational, immoral, and un-

piritual tyranny of taboos, traditions, and legalisms. He en-lowed him with the gift of the Divine principles of His Gospel, he presence and guidance of the Divine Spirit, and fellowship n a Divine society instituted to advance the Kingdom of God.

The Christian man has been slow to realize the nature and o claim the privileges of his heritage of freedom, truth, and ove. When he does so, he will cease to use Scripture as a legal ode demanding his servile obedience. As a rational, moral, nd spiritual creature he will claim what St. Paul has called the glorious liberty of the children of God.'

## II.

### Marriage and Divorce in Christian History.

Owing to the conflicting record of Christ's teaching there would seem from very early times to have been conflicting prac-ice in the Church with regard to divorce, especially as all parties nsisted on treating the New Testament as a legal code.

The Greek Church has permitted divorce *a vinculo matri-nonii* for adultery and malicious desertion. The Latin Church as forbidden divorce, but has, in certain cases, permitted legal eparation *a mensa et thoro*, and has made, in other cases, a levastating use of the notorious method of *disannulment*. The ullification of marriage was permitted by the Latin Canonists or a number of reasons, for example, tender years, absence of ersonal consent, compulsion by force or fraud, impotency or ack of consummation, illicit intercourse with a wife's or hus-and's relation before marriage: consanguinity, affinity, and piritual affinity, *i.e.* of sponsors and godchildren. For instance, marriage contracted, without dispensation, by those related in he seventh degree of consanguinity or affinity could be declared ull and void before 1215 A.D., but after that date it was reduced o the fourth degree. That is, under the older restriction a man ould not marry anyone descended from his great, great, great, reat, great, grandfather or grandmother, and by the later re-triction anyone descended from his great, great, grandfather r grandmother.

That would mean, in an English village to-day, that there s hardly a marriage which would not be liable to disannulment,

if the parties had the will and money to secure the decree of the Roman Rota.

Indeed, so varied and ingenious are the legal causes for annulment that there is scarcely any marriage which skilful canonists could not discover legal reasons for annulling. The practice has become a serious scandal, not only because of the threat to the stability of marriage, but because of the financial benefits which accrue to the Church that practises it.* Dr. Charles, in Chapter IV of his little book, *Divorce and Nullity* (T. and T. Clark), furnishes examples of the deplorable results of this procedure. Only recently English morality was shocked by the disannulment of a ducal marriage where children had been born and the parties had lived together as husband and wife for many years.

While by her public denunciation and prohibition of divorce the Church of Rome secures the reputation of being the courageous champion of the indissolubility of Christian marriage, her practice of disannulment behind the scenes presents her in a very different light.

Many of the decisions of the Roman Rota would be unthinkable in our English law courts, and would outrage moral feeling in the Reformed Churches. Yet we find that, trading on the ignorance of the public, which knows little of the sophistries of Roman casuists, the apologists of the Roman Church have the effrontery to claim that that communion stands as the stalwart defender of the sanctity and indissolubility of marriage, as against the dangerous laxity of the Protestant Churches.

In the Reformed Churches the standards of sexual morality have been, on the whole, higher than throughout the Roman Church, and the Roman Church has always been at its best in those localities in which it is in competition with Protestantism.

The tendency in the Reformed Churches is to reprobate adultery, but to condone divorce, and *vice versa* in the Church of Rome. The Church of England has never been entirely united in its matrimonial policy. It was bound, in pre-Reformation times, by the Canon Law that taught as an inflexible religious dogma that all forms of intercourse of the sexes, other than life-long unions, are unChristian and criminal. It was only in 1857 that a divorce *a vinculo matrimonii* was obtainable in the

* See Appendix to this article, pp. 344-46.

English law courts. Before that day a Private Act of Parliament was necessary and very difficult to secure.

Some in the English Church to-day stand for strict adhesion to the Canon Law: some for the essentially Christian character of later legal departures from it. The former, if clergymen, refuse to solemnize the marriage of what is called 'the innocent party,' the latter have no objection to doing so.

Although the Church has allowed the Christian a large freedom in the possession and use of his property, it has adopted a strictly legalist line in the regulation and control of the sex-relations of Christian people. It has not only decided how they shall marry, but whom they may not marry.

The Roman priest must not marry. The Greek parish priest must marry, but may not marry again after his wife's decease. The English priest may not marry his deceased wife's sister, although the layman is free in all these cases.

It has enforced its sex-discipline by penalties. When it succeeded in the twelfth century in making the Canon Law the civil law of Europe, the penalties were such as are inflicted on criminals. In other cases the penalties were public censure, penance, and excommunication. In all this the Church passed far beyond anything that Christ had taught as we see His teaching in the light of the modern criticism of the New Testament.

## III.

### The Modern Situation and the Church's Policy.

This ecclesiastical discipline came into the Church, not from Jesus Christ, who was reported to have said: 'Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out' (*John* vi, 37), but from the Jewish synagogue, and it came in mainly through the example of that great ecclesiastical statesman, St. Paul. It may have been a good thing at that time, and in those regions, that it did come in, but it is the conviction of many to-day that it would be a good thing in the English Church if we parted with it altogether. If, accepting as we do the authority of the moral and spiritual ideals of Jesus Christ in this matter, we strove as a Church to render them influential and effective solely by means of teaching and example alone.

Ecclesiastical discipline cannot make the Christian ideal of marriage vital and attractive: that must be done by quite other means. Whilst we recognize what the Christian religion owes to the Christian Church, and what the purity of family life owes to the Christian religion—indeed the maintenance of the ideal relation of the sexes as a life-long monogamy would, without them, have yielded to the powerful temptations of sexual promiscuity as in Russia to-day—yet it is not Church discipline which in this age and country can effect the triumph of the Christian ideal of marriage. Such disciplinary measures may have been effective in days gone by: but the English race is now past the age of tutelage. To-day Church discipline does not educate, but irritate. Once it was regarded as Christian: now there is a growing feeling that it is unChristian. It is seeking to do the right thing in the wrong way. It ought to be frankly and definitely abandoned. The English Church ought to say: 'We seek to inflict no penalties. We excommunicate none. There are ideals in this matter of sexual relationship. You ought as Christians to seek to realize them: and we will do our best to help you to realize them. We shall seek to do it by fellowship, by education, by example, by inspiration, by those means of grace which the Church possesses potentially and conditionally—but whatever you do, we shall not excommunicate you. To do that is not only to confess failure, but also to make it harder for you to do right. If you excommunicate yourselves because you feel you are wilfully flouting Christ's ideals, that is your doing, it is not ours.'

> 'They went from us,' says St. John, 'because they were not of us. Had they been of us, they would doubtless have continued with us.'

Assuming that the English Church is going to abandon the antiquated, broken-down, and really sub-Christian method of excommunication, how shall it proceed?

The Church must proceed to give much more instruction about sex-problems, and in a modern, scientific, and attractive fashion. It is intensely difficult, and in some degree dangerous to give such teaching. Certainly when given *viva voce* it should be given by women to girls and by men to lads. Much, however, can also be done by literature and by fellowships. An extremely good example of such teaching for adolescents of the educated

classes is the chapter on 'Moral Adventure' in Canon Streeter's *Adventure*[3] and Dr. Douglas White's little booklet, *An Open Letter to Young Men.*

The Church ought to institute definite training for marriage. The Church needs to promote definitely the right kind of marriages and to prevent, if possible, the wrong kind of marriages. It may be said that the Church has tried to do this. No doubt it has, but too often in the wrong way. It has been influenced by taboos too much and by science too little.

To take a modern instance, if the Church of England had put the same amount of moral energy into the attempt to secure eugenic marriages that it has put into its opposition to the marriage of the deceased wife's sister, things would be in a much better state than they are to-day with our mounting number of imbeciles and incurables, and the Church would have gained a moral authority in this sphere, which its pugnacity of the wrong kind has done much to deprive it of.

Yet the Church has stressed the physical side of marriage, although not the eugenic side. It is the sexual aspect of the physical that the Church has stressed. We feel this, I think, in the marriage service. We see it in what are regarded as the Christian conditions of a valid marriage. Defect here may lead to the nullification of a marriage, but the mental, moral, and spiritual qualifications are not officially stressed by the Church, nor the impediments which arise, when they are absent.

Mr. Bertrand Russell's criticism of Christian marriage is not here without justification.

It has been said that religion is caught, not taught. Atmosphere and example, not precepts and prohibitions are what avail. What is true of religion is true of sexual morality. The attraction of the Christian ideal of marriage: the attraction of the health and happiness of the Christian home, are what the Church needs most to present to mankind in this matter.

Perhaps I may be pardoned an illustration. I have a friend, a Scotch doctor living in a distant Dominion. He has a brother, also a doctor: and when his brother was leaving the dominion on a visit to Scotland, he said to him: 'Do bring me back something from the old place, a sculptured stone, or something that

[3] S.C.M. Reprint, 1928.

I can build into my house here.' When his brother got to their native place—it was a little island—he did not forget. He told an old sailor there about it. 'I've got just what you want,' said the sailor, and he went over to a derelict vessel on the beach, climbed into the cuddy-hole, and reappeared with a piece of board. On it was carved the words, '*Ours is a happy home.*' The doctor brought it out to his brother, who set it up in his dining-room.

When the Christian home can be shown to be in every way better and happier than the non-Christian, then Christ's ideal of marriage will prevail, but in any case disciplinary, legislative efforts are not going to accomplish this.

But there are no short cuts to that victory. Prohibitions, denunciations, excommunications, are all vain. We are always being led into making the mistake of regarding symptoms as causes, and treating them as such. Divorces and separations are symptoms of unhappy marriage. The way to abolish divorce is to eliminate the unhappy marriage. It is, then, the unhappy marriage, or rather, the prevention of it, upon which the Church should concentrate. It is said very truly that a country gets the kind of government it deserves, and a community gets the kind of marriages it deserves.

If we do nothing to prevent the diseased, the ignorant, the utterly undisciplined, irresponsible and self-indulgent from marrying, if, moreover, their whole object in marrying is individualist self-gratification and not mutual help and the building up of a home, need we be surprised that such marriages turn out unhappily and lead finally to separation?

Christian marriage can only be firmly based on Christian character. It is then this matter of the Christian character that the Church should concern itself with primarily, and it need have no fear that the Christian character will not justify itself in the delicate and difficult sphere of marriage, as in every other relation of life. Let the Church then cease to fulminate against those who are seeking to relieve our present marriage laws of what they regard as their hardships and inhumanities: and let it instead by advice, by guidance, by encouragement, by example, by inspiration, seek to create the rational, moral and

spiritual conditions in the community out of which happy marriages arise.

The Church needs to study and practise much more the indirect method of attack in this and in other campaigns. It needs to undermine, to outflank, to encircle. Frontal attacks are very futile and expensive affairs. It is not prohibition, but various indirect means which have so greatly reduced drunkenness in this country, *e.g.* improved conditions of the liquor traffic: improved housing: the opportunity of travel provided by the bicycle and side-car, and so on.

In our modern world, besides the individual weaknesses of character of the married, there are many external things which are detrimental to the realization of a noble and happy married life. Terrible housing conditions, for example: debilitating public entertainments, evil literature, etc. But it is not the censor we must look to in such matters, but to education. These things mainly exist because there is a public to patronize them.

> 'The Drama's laws the Drama's patrons give,
> For they who live to please, must please to live.'

The only way to reduce the number of marriage failures is to develop the Christian character, and that is the particular duty of the Church.

It will be charged against me that, in saying this, I have not said anything very helpful, that I have evaded the real difficulties. For instance, what attitude should the Church take up if the State proceeds to render divorce more easy? I should reply that the Church's attitude to the State ought to be exactly what I have advocated it should be towards the individual citizen, an attitude of forbearance, persuasion, example, fellowship.

But suppose, besides sanctioning divorces which the Church cannot approve, the State also sanctions marriages which the Church cannot approve, would you advocate that the clergy should solemnize them? My own conviction is that the Church should strive to secure compulsory civil marriage, and leave it to those who have been civilly married to seek, if they wish it, for the solemnization of their marriage by the Church, and that the Church should be left free, by the State, to decide on what conditions it will solemnize civil marriages. I cannot think that there would be any powerful opposition to this policy.

I would further urge that the Church (I mean the Church of England) should not lay down hard and fast rules as to whose marriages are to be solemnized and whose not. I think each case should be decided on its merits, and in the first instance, by the parish priest to whom the request is made for solemnization. If he is unable or unwilling to decide, then the decision should rest with the Bishop or his deputy. I am against hard and fast rules. The Church of Rome in its method of procedure is much wiser than the Church of England. No doubt it is greatly helped by its practice of auricular confession.

Moreover, I would advocate that, on no account, should the Church refuse the Holy Communion to any on the ground that it has been unable to solemnize their marriage. Excommunication can only do harm in such a case.

There are two points I would urge in conclusion.

(1) That the Church authorities should not threaten to demand disestablishment because they do not like the State's marriage and divorce reforms. Bishop Creighton, in a notable letter, wrote to Bishop Luckock :

> 'I must own, myself, to a strong indisposition to set the Church against the State on such a point as the interpretation of the latitude to be assigned to the permission of dissolution which our Lord's words imply.'

That seems to me to be a really statesmanlike utterance and entirely justified in view of the character of our Lord's teaching on this matter as recorded in the New Testament.

(2) The Christian ideal of marriage is by no means so secure in the modern world as the action of its clerical defenders seems to suggest. The priests who confidently took the Ark into battle against the Philistines made a grave mistake. The Church, by fighting tenaciously against the State's proposals for marriage reform may easily end by giving our British public the impression that the Church is the exponent of a hard-hearted, fanatical, inhuman, impossible policy, and this may very seriously increase the prejudice against the whole ideal of Christian marriage in this country.

## PAPAL ANNULMENTS AND DISPENSATIONS.

This paper in the sections which refer to the Roman Church is exactly as I read it to the Conference. As it has been violently attacked by the Roman Catholic press and in Roman Catholic pulpits, I am compelled to

stify my statements. The following citations from learned and reputable thors will, I trust, suffice.

ORD ACTON, *Historical Essays and Studies*, pp. 76, 77.

Chapter II (The Borgias) : 'Marriage dispensations became, by careful anagement, productive sources of revenue and of political influence.'

ARL VON HASE, *Handbook to the Controversy with Rome*, edited and translated by A. W. Streane (Fellow of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge) : publ. Religious Tract Society, 1906, p. 303, vol. ii.

'Throughout the whole of the Middle Ages numerous couples bound ly love or by law were separated on the score of nullity, for owing to the ay in which degrees of relationship even to the remotest branches were nsidered as excluding marriage, it was seldom difficult to discover some rt of relationship, or to cause it to be discovered by a fictitious genealogy.'

P. 321.—'Modern canonists advise another revision of the marriage ws in order to bring them into harmony with the settled demands of the me. They advise the reduction of the forbidden degrees of relationship that of first cousins, the forbidden degrees of affinity in collateral lines the first degree, and spiritual relationship to the marriage of a godarent to the person baptized : but the attachment to ancient tradition and ie profit accruing to the papal court has for this long time caused these oderate proposals to pass unheeded.'

. C. LEA, *Studies in Church History:* Philadelphia, 1883, p. 321.

'They are the source of the ecclesiastical jurisdiction over all questions nnected with marriage which subsequently ensured so much to the power id profit of the Church.'

P. 356.—'We have seen how the Church acquired jurisdiction over ie subject of marriage, and all history, from the time of Lothair and eutberga to that of Henry VIII and Katharine of Arragon, shows the nmense influence which it thus obtained over the affairs of nations and individuals.'

. C. LEA, *Auricular Confession and Indulgences*, p. 167/8, vol. ii.

'It is a reasonable presumption, therefore, that the routine of absolution by the penitentiaries produced a revenue over and above the comaratively trivial fees of the tax lists, which explains the absence of elevancy between those fees and the nature of the crimes, and which justies the contemporary assertions of the sale by the curia of pardons for n.

'It would, of course, be unjust to conclude that in its use of the authority bind and loose the Church looked solely to its own aggrandizement in ealth and power, but the evidence is unfortunately too strong and decisive iat it habitually exploited its assumed control over salvation for self-eeking purposes in every way that its ingenuity could suggest.'

RCHDEACON R. H. CHARLES, D.D., D.LITT., *Divorce and Nullity*. Publ. T. and T. Clark, 1927. Chapter II, p. 34/5.

'But this is not all. When this fiction was linked up with the numerous ntastic impediments which the Mediaeval Church devised to a valid marage, it gave birth to the extraordinary dogma of nullity which is the eculiar property of the Roman Church, and which in the hands of the oman Curia has been the source of intolerable moral scandals during the ast six hundred years as well as of a large revenue.

F.N., p. 35. This revenue has varied naturally according to the nature of the cases and the characters of the Popes. Within the last fifty years the cost of procuring a decree of nullity or a dispensation has varied from the modest fee of seven dollars in French Canada to £4,000 in the case of the prince who in 1888 was allowed by the Vatican to marry his niece.'

P. 82.—'The English Courts do not claim to be the organ of an infallible Church. Their verdicts may be reversed subsequently on the discovery of fresh evidence or wiser conclusions, and as the *Solicitors' Journal* (Nov. 20, 1926) states, such verdicts as that of the Roman Rota would be unthinkable in English Courts at the present day.

Should the sane minds of our countrymen be inclined to doubt the authenticity of such practices, they have only to refer to the decision of the Sacred Rota at Rome which on April 13th, 1927, confirmed the sentence of the (Roman) Diocesan Court of Westminster, which court had already declared the Marconi marriage null and void. This decision followed closely on the heels of that of the Vanderbilt-Marlborough marriage. According to the evidence it appears that the bridegroom and bride in this marriage agreed before their marriage that either of the persons concerned should be at liberty to sue for a declaration of nullity. 'The decision in the Marconi case makes it clear . . . to all . . . Romanists who may be contemplating marriage that they can easily and certainly evade their Church's professed principle of the indissolubility of the marriage tie, by agreeing beforehand, and with a few of the bride's relatives, that they reserve the right to sue for a divorce. If they do so, and afterwards get tired of each other, they can apply to the Sacred Roman Rota, and that court will pronounce their marriage to have been and to be null, and will, according to *The Tablet*, be discharging its duty in setting the parties free to enter into other marriages' (quoted from Dr. Fleming's *Church of Rome and Marriage*, p. 56).

A husband can devise some convenient impediment and keep it in the background for years, and then bring it forward when it suits his purpose. Recently an Italian married an American woman and stated that he was domiciled in a certain parish in Rome. On the ground that this declaration of domicile was false, and that his only domicile was at Bologna, this unprincipled Italian succeeded in getting his marriage declared null and void two years later.' (Canon Lacey in *The Times*, November 18, 1926.)

For other cases I refer my readers to Dr. R. H. Charles' book, *Divorce and Nullity* (T. and T. Clark, 1927, price 1/6). I believe it to be quite correct. On the other hand, I think it only fair to state that I have received letters from Fr. Woodlock, Fr. Martindale, Mgr. Barton Brown and other Roman Catholic priests acquainted with present-day procedure, and they inform me that the Roman Church does not make money out of these cases. *E.g.* the expenses of the Vanderbilt-Marlborough case were only £120, and that for poor people and where the proceedings are less complicated the cost is only a few shillings. *I feel bound to accept these affirmations, and I hope that they will outweigh any implications that might be drawn from my paper that the Roman Church enriches itself by this means to-day.*

That some of these annulments, whether cheap or costly, are a serious scandal, I am compelled to assert. I do think, however, that the protest aroused by the Marlborough and Marconi cases has had a chastening effect, and that modern public feeling in Protestant countries will do much to make similar annulments impossible in the future. H.D.A.M.

# MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE IN THE MODERN STATE

the Rev. W. F. Geikie-Cobb, D.D., Rector of St. Ethelburga's within Bishopsgate, E.C.2.

T may be assumed at the outset that the genesis of the existing institution of marriage has been sufficiently explored, l that all that remains to be said is to describe what is, to point where it is deficient, confused, or mischievous, and to suggt remedies.

For any clogging of the wheels both Church and State are ponsible, that is, our general inertness and ignorance. Those o speak for the Church are not helping on the cause of human- by talking of the law of the Church, or of the indissolubility marriage, or of the binding force of texts—especially when en out of their context. These do but confuse the issue. So as the State is concerned the chief blame lies on the House Commons, which finds time for party measures and ignores se which are of general importance.

In this country the problem is at once simplified and compli- ed by the presence of a State Church. For members of that urch the problem is, or should be, the more easy of solution, ing that the sole law imposed on them is the King's ecclesias- al law. On the other hand, doubts may arise, scruples have sen, as to the competence of the State to impose its will on citizens in so personal and delicate a relationship as is estab- ned by marriage.

## The Law of the Church.

On the one side, then, difficulties are caused if and when- r a demand is made for a 'law of the Church' to be recog- ed, though differing from the law of the State, and perhaps onsistent with that law. The difficulty attending on this de- nd comes from the vagueness of the term 'the Church.' What urch? It is not open to Anglicans, anyhow, to appeal to the ly Roman Church as their superior Court of Appeal. They

do not, and cannot, intend it to be understood that they have the Orthodox Church of the East in mind; nor can their appeal as to marriage law be to the undivided Church of East and West, for it has never been unanimous on this head, and the two are in disagreement to-day. Nor again is it legitimate for those who are the heirs of the Reformers to insist that the laws governing the mediaeval Church override those in force to-day.

Until, therefore, the Church to which the appeal is made is more clearly defined, we are entitled to attach no weight to the claim to supersede the law of the State-Church, by the law of a hypothetical Church.

### The Indissolubility of Marriage.

A further obstacle is thrown on the path by the oft-repeated assertion that any marriage once fully contracted is indissoluble. There is a sense in which this assertion is profoundly true, far more true than its champions seem to be aware. But it is false in the sense in which it is stated ordinarily. For it ignores the old and useful adage that *dolus latet in generalibus*, by lumping together under one head every kind of marriage at every level of culture.

For instance, St. Thomas rightly insists that matrimony among men is of natural right, both in the sense that it is common to all animals, but also in the further sense that it is constituted for the education of children as well as for their begetting.[1] And from this point of view, he is also right in attaching mutual fidelity as an inherent duty in the parents for the good of their offspring. Further, he lays down that free consent expressed by *verba de praesenti*, are a necessary preliminary to a valid marriage.[2] And these conclusions hold good still.

But could St. Thomas have been transplanted to these modern times, and have exercised the freedom from scholasticism which came to him in his later years, he would have restated his conclusions, and modified them by large additions. He would have been less certain that marriage is solely for the procreation of children, and would have found that sex is of the soul as well as of the body, and that, therefore, 'the mutual

[1] *Supp.* Qu. xli, i.c.
[2] *Ibid.* Qu. xlv, 4.

ciety, help and comfort that the one ought to have of the ner' is, to say the least, not less important a constituent of rriage than the founding of a family.

Nor, set in a different mental climate, would St. Thomas el called upon to unsay his description of marriage as a sacra- ent. But he would have been impelled to extend his use of the m. His acute mind would no doubt discern the truth that all nsible things are of a sacramental character, 'alles vergän- che ist nur ein Gleichnis,' and that marriage as a sacrament ist take a more lowly place as one of the many natural signs ich point to a supranatural reality.

## The Revival of Mediaevalism.

Unhappily, the scholasticism which the sixteenth century ndly hoped had been outlived, has again raised its head to oclaim ancient shibboleths which are only half understood by ose who use them, and not at all by those who take them at eir face value. Among these shibboleths is that of the indis- lubility of marriage. And what confers this indissolubility, e are told, is not consent, nor contract, but the act of physical ion following on consent. That is to say, that a marriage duly tered upon may be declared null and void before consumma- n, but not at all afterwards. But surely this accepted Catholic ctrine ranks marriage far too low, deprives it of its glory as an stitution of Faith and Reason, and contemplates it on its imal side alone.

Nor is the case made better by the demand that the consent ich makes matrimony is a consent to accept matrimony as the hurch accepts it. For this, though intelligible, workable, and r lower stages of culture satisfactory, robs matrimony of its itive worth by making it subservient to an external authority, stead of springing spontaneously from the sanctified common- nse of the married couple.

In short, the dogma that any and every marriage is indis- luble is, as the Archdeacon of Westminster has said, 'a human tion founded on an unhistorical basis.'

Hence, if we are to allow ourselves to think at all of an in- ssoluble marriage, we must lift up our eyes to the hills, and iquire whether the alleged indissolubility may not attach itself

to some marriages only, and not at all to others. This distinc tion, indeed, seems to float before the minds of those who se an ethical distinction between marriages solemnized before a civil registrar and marriages solemnized in a church. And it i testified to by the many couples, who being civilly married, ye feel it necessary to seek afterwards the blessing of their church But a little reflection might well make us doubt whether thi mode of distinguishing will hold good. The ethical ground o an action is free choice, and choice is by an individual will, and hence it is to the individual we must look when we want to know where indissolubility is to be found.

### Christian Marriage.

This brings us to the affirmation in which all should agree that *Christian marriage, and Christian marriage alone is indissoluble.* But unhappily we are not agreed as to what Christian marriage is, and until we know what it is, we should do well not to talk of its being indissoluble. Yet we need not look beyond our New Testament to tell us that according to Jesus Christ the one force which links us on to the eternal is Love. Where, therefore, Love rules the marriage, the marriage is unbreakable, for who, said the Emperor Justin, would wish to separate himself from a perfect wife?

If this be accepted, we shall cease to set up an ethical distinction between a civil and an ecclesiastical ceremony; we shall also be shy of demanding a law of the Church to supersede, or to run parallel to the law of the State. For Love is its own law, or rather is able to dispense with all positive law, having the law in itself. Indeed, as Tom Paine said, God made society and the devil makes the laws; for if there were no wickedness no laws would be necessary, and all wickedness springs from want of Love.

### The Empirical Church.

Here we must pause, for a great gulf yawns before us. We are face to face with a difficulty which might well seem insurmountable. Every Church that we know is founded on tradition, creeds, organization, law and order. It is, in other words, part

the structure of the world around us. And it is not easy to see ow it could be anything else. And yet as such it can never atisfy the thirst of man for God; it is a means to an end, a John aptist to bring men to Christ, not itself the Church of Christ. it can help men to secure God's supreme gift of love, it has one all it can, and must then resign all claim against the man at Love has marked for its own.

The conclusion to be drawn from this is that all cry for a w of the Church to overrule the law of the State is inadmis- ble, unless indeed it can be shown that the law of the Church likely to be nearer to the spirit of Love than that of the State. nd in no case has this been done yet. Of course, it may be ged that the law of the State to-day in this country sanctions ivorce, and that the Church's law calls on married people to ke one another until death does them part, and that therefore e law of the Church is superior. But this is fallacious. The arriage service, though accepted by the Church, is imposed by arliament. But it does not follow that the clause in question necessarily of the nature of a legal contract. It is better in very respect to say with the late saintly Bishop King of Lincoln at it is the statement of an ideal, an ideal which very properly ll who enter upon marriage, whether in the Church or outside f it, should keep before their minds at all times, and do their tmost to make actual.

So far, then, as we can see, any difficulties or dangers which tend on marriage as an institution are not lessened but accen- ated by demands for a higher and a lower standard of mar- age; by cries for the 'law of the Church'; by insisting on dissolubility as if it were universally applicable; by using this, at, or the other text, taken from its context and treated as a rmula of magic, as if it could by any possibility decide any- ing whatsoever. The official Church, it is sad to say, has only arkened counsel, and confirmed in their prejudices those who llow like sheep along a path which leads nowhere. If marriage to be rescued from the degradation into which it has been lunged, those who set out as leaders in the Church must first oulder their responsibility for lowering the standard of mar- age, and not lay the blame unctuously on victims whom they ave helped to create.

### The Law of the State.

When we leave the Church for the State we seem to be exchanging a hothouse for a barrack-yard. We are at least called on to face facts, but they are facts still in the shade, coloured by prejudice, and embedded in a tight mass of tradition which clings like a straight waistcoat. A judge sitting in the High Court declared recently that the law 'at present is a bundle of detached rules and scraps of legislation which are all inconsistent one with the other'; that 'we start with an ecclesiastical government, and then, by legislation, in a wholly scrappy way, it has been turned into a patchwork garment. Some of the patches are big, and some small, and they have all been put on without any reference to any consistent pattern.'[3]

It is folly to urge, as against the existing system, the repeal of the Divorce Act of 1857, and it is a blunder to suppose that that Act made divorce legal for the first time. All that it did was to recognize that divorce was possible, to simplify the cumbrous process by which it could be obtained, and to remove divorce from the jurisdiction of the ecclesiastical courts.

### The Patchwork.

Unfortunately the work of reform was only half done, and, as time was to show, the patchwork was destined to disfigure its wearer. A sinister clause was inserted in the Act which provided that 'the court should act on principles and rules as nearly as possible conformable to the principles and rules of the ecclesiastical courts.' This means that the Roman superstition that no marriage is fully constituted without consummation was taken over, and hence that adultery was the only valid ground for the recognition of a breach. Further, the rule which judges have consistently acted on is that their duty is to give relief to an injured party. This is no doubt sound law, but it is bad from the point of view of public policy and social welfare. The result is that when a marriage is half bad by the misconduct of one of the partners it may be dissolved, but when it is wholly bad by the misconduct of both it is legally indissoluble, unless the judge exercises his discretion. In other words, the traditions

[3] *Daily Telegraph*, June 27th, 1930: Criticism by Mr. Justice Hill.

hich encumber our marriage laws make it difficult for judges
) regard the upholding of the marriage tie as their principal
unction. But it is fair to add that frequently their practice is
etter than the theories thrust upon them.

It would be difficult to find any civilized country which did
ot regard adultery as one of the grounds for a petition for
ivorce. But at the same time almost every country, outside
iose which are still under the sway of the Latin tradition, allows
ther grounds as valid with or without adultery as a concomi-
int. So highly moral a country as Scotland has for three hun-
red years recognized 'malicious desertion for four years' as a
ood ground. And Scottish morals have thereby suffered no
oss.

For example, while no divorce is allowed in Argentine,
olivia, Chile, Colombia, the Irish Free State, Newfoundland,
nd Spain, and while the provinces of Canada are still unre-
ormed, the Scandinavian countries have all accepted cruelty,
esertion, imprisonment and lunacy as good grounds for divorce,
nd New South Wales, New Zealand, Victoria and Tasmania
ccept these and add 'neglect of domestic duties' and 'habitual
runkenness.'

Uruguay, Latvia, Japan and Haiti add 'mutual consent.'

Turkey allows 'undignified conduct' and incompatibility of
emper as good causes.

Five countries (Japan, Latvia, New South Wales, New
ealand and Turkey) allow divorce for incompatibility; and
our (Japan, Latvia, Haiti and Uruguay) recognize mutual
onsent.

In short, roughly speaking the majority of countries which
erive their culture from Teutonic traditions treat marriage as
contract which may become void for specified reasons, while
ountries which have been infected by Latin traditions regard it
s still subject to the provisions of the Canon Law of Rome.
ngland stands out as ruled by neither, but as wearing motley.[4]

Further, the Orthodox Eastern Church grants divorce for
dultery by the wife; if she plots against her husband's life;
she remains outside his house; if she attends race meetings,
heatres or the hunt without his knowledge; if she becomes

[4] See Appendix A.

insane. The wife also can obtain divorce if her husband plots against the monarchy; if he plots against her life; if he prostitutes her; if he is convicted of adultery; if he is impotent. And a more recent law admits divorce for incompatibility of character, and even by mutual consent. Civil Courts try the suit, and when the case has been heard the Public Attorney forwards his decision to the Episcopal authorities, who then grant the ecclesiastical divorce.

How is it then that England lags so far behind the rest of the civilized world? The answer is to be found partly in the confused state of mind in considerable groups of citizens, and partly in our iniquitous party-system of government which makes party measures the first interest of the House of Commons. The apathy of the Commons is shamed by the active sober sense of the Lords. In 1920 and again in 1924 a Bill was passed to give effect to the Report of the Royal Commission of 1909-12, one of the strongest Royal Commissions of modern times. But the example of the Lords has been unavailing, and our marriage muddle still remains.

What then did that Royal Commission recommend? It faced steadily the incontrovertible truth that the end determines the means, and that the means must be modified, if and when they cease to promote the end. Opponents of reform are right in reminding us that the founding of a family is one of the ends of marriage, and in insisting that adultery is an offence against that end. But the Royal Commission was clear that there exist other offences, if anything more destructive of the ends of marriage than adultery. Especially is this the case when 'the mutual society, help and comfort' which the married pair should enjoy is put in the forefront of the ends of marriage. And adultery, though a grave offence, is not necessarily so destructive of that mutual love as are some other offences.

With praiseworthy moderation and sound practical good sense the Royal Commission singled out five modes of injury which ought to be added as sufficient ground for a divorce, *viz.* malicious desertion, cruelty, habitual drunkenness, incurable insanity and life-long imprisonment. Will anybody of even ordinary humanity deny that these are destructive of marriage, or claim that where these are proved to have destroyed a mar-

riage, yet a 'human fiction' demands that the marriage which is now no marriage should still be kept up as an empty shell? *L'hypocrisie biblique britannique* is capable of much, but this should be beyond it. What it has, however, succeeded in doing is in degrading marriage by refusing to face facts. As a perfervid orator lately informed the Church Assembly, marriage, as he elegantly put it, has been dragged through a cesspool. He failed, however, to add that it is he and his fellows who have done the dragging, and built the cesspool.

It may be convenient to summarize in axiomatic form what has been said above about 'marriage and divorce in the modern State.'

(1) Members of the Churchmen's Union are as desirous as anybody else of maintaining the sanctity of the marriage tie, and they hold that the best way to do this is to bring our laws into line with what sanctified common-sense dictates:

(2) They are not in favour of 'easier divorce,' but of cleaner and more humane divorce; nor do they hold that an extension of the grounds of divorce is synonymous with easier divorce:

(3) Appeal to isolated texts is no longer permissible, since all competent authorities are agreed that Jesus asserted principles and left no precepts of law:

(4) The dogma of the indissolubility of all marriages is an outworn superstition:

(5) If it be true—which it is not—that the one end of marriage is the procreation of children, logic demands that a childless marriage should be dissoluble; the same follows when the children are grown up and no longer need parental care. In any case, a marriage with children and a marriage without children, are socially so different that they should not be subjected to the same rules:

(6) Politicians inform us that the Catholic vote is the obstacle to reform; the Catholic, therefore, is one who, not wanting for himself a sane marriage law, arrogates a right to deny it to those who do. He is a dog in the manger:

(7) The spheres of the Church and of the State are distinct. The function of the State is to uphold justice, and its laws are concerned exclusively with the maintenance of the rights of all where marriage is concerned:

(8) The Church, if it be a Christian Church, is not entitled to set up laws in this matter, but is bound to limit itself to the inculcation of the spirit of love and mutual service on all married persons:

(9) Whenever an application is made for the re-marriage in church of a divorced person, the incumbent should not be subject to any censure if in his discretion he judges that such a re-marriage is in the circumstances right and proper:

(10) Judicial separation as a substitute for divorce should be abolished:

(11) Divorce naturally and necessarily carries with it freedom to marry:

(12) In short, 'the stability and success of marriage' will be best secured by the State establishing a sane system of laws concerning marriage, and by the Church confining its energies to the maintenance of the Christian spirit by all who enter into lawful marriage.

It only remains to make the respectful suggestion that the Churchmen's Union will best serve the cause of the Master and of the health and wealth of the nation by giving practical effect to its own admirable Report on Divorce. The time is ripe, the need is great. Ought the Church of England to go on the easy assumption that it is under no obligation to give a lead in a matter which enters so deeply into the welfare and happiness of hundreds of thousands whose hearts have been made sad, not by God, but by man?

A manifest change for the better, and therefore in favour of reform has set in and is daily gaining momentum. It only needs spokesmen to guide it and lead it to victory. And a Church which is called the National Church seems bound in honour to take the initiative. And where others hold back, or are frankly reactionary, the Modern Churchmen's Union might seem marked out for leadership. The time for theorizing has gone by. Action is called for to-day. When the invitation comes, 'Who will go for us?' let us not at all events say, 'Here am I, send *him*.'

## APPENDIX A.

No Divorce.—Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Irish Free State, Newfoundland, Spain.

Adultery.—All, except where no divorce is allowed.

DESERTION.—Estonia, Finland, Germany, Greece, Japan, Latvia (all refusal to cohabit), Netherlands, N.S. Wales (add neglect of domestic duties), New Zealand (adds neglect of domestic duties and judicial separation after three years), Queensland, Scandinavia, Southern Rhodesia, Turkey, Uruguay.

CRUELTY.—Estonia, Finland (add certain diseases), Germany, Greece, Haiti, Japan, Latvia, Netherlands, N.S. Wales, New Zealand, Scandinavia (add venereal disease), Tasmania, Turkey, Uruguay, Victoria.

DRUNKENNESS.—Estonia, Finland, N.S. Wales, New Zealand, Tasmania, Victoria.

IMPRISONMENT.—Estonia, Finland, Haiti, Japan, Netherlands, N.S. Wales, New Zealand, Scandinavia, Tasmania, Turkey, Uruguay.

INCOMPATIBILITY.—Estonia, Germany, Japan, Latvia (criminal, dishonest or immoral life), N.S. Wales, New Zealand, Turkey.

MUTUAL CONSENT.—Estonia, Haiti, Japan, Latvia, Uruguay.

INSANITY.—Estonia, Finland (add imbecility), Germany, Greece, Latvia, New Zealand, Queensland, Scandinavia, Tasmania, Turkey, Victoria.

## APPENDIX B.

*Laws of Divorce in various countries.*

THE ORTHODOX EASTERN CHURCH.—Adultery, danger to life, unseemly conduct, insanity. An ecclesiastical divorce follows on a civil decree of the episcopal authorities. Recently, incompatibility of character and divorce by mutual agreement have been sanctioned.

ARGENTINA.—No divorce: separation only.

BOLIVIA.—No divorce: separation only.

CANADA:

ONTARIO, QUEBEC and BRITISH COLUMBIA.—Under a special Act of Parliament, as in England in 1856.

NEW BRUNSWICK.—Adultery only.

MANITOBA, SASKATCHEWAN and ALBERTA.—Under the English law as it stood in 1870.

CHILE.—No divorce: separation only.

COLUMBIA.—No divorce: separation only.

ESTONIA.—Adultery, desertion, lunacy, venereal disease, drunkenness, cruelty, incompatibility, imprisonment, mutual consent.

FINLAND.—Misconduct, certain diseases, ill-treatment, desertion, continuous use of intoxicants, imprisonment, insanity.

FRANCE.—Adultery, excesses, 'cruelty or conduct to the grave prejudice of either party, condemnation of one of the parties to punishment for serious crime.'

GERMANY.—Adultery, danger to life, malicious desertion, refusal to obey decree of restitution of conjugal rights, neglect of marriage duties, lunacy.

GREECE.—Adultery or bigamy, danger to life, insanity, desertion.

HAITI.—Adultery, grave injury, punishment.

IRISH FREE STATE.—No divorce: separation only.

JAPAN.—Mutual consent, adultery by the wife, the husband being punished for criminal carnal intercourse, either party being sentenced to punishment for any offence greater than a misdemeanour, or to a major imprisonment, ill-treatment rendering further living together impracticable, desertion by either party, disappearance for three years.

Latvia.—Misconduct, cruelty, desertion, insanity, criminal, dishonest or immoral life, infertility, refusal to cohabit, ruined married life, separation by mutual consent.

Netherlands.—Adultery, malicious desertion, cruelty, imprisonment.

Newfoundland.—No divorce; if a Newfoundlander wishes to be divorced he must become domiciled in another country.

New South Wales.—Adultery, desertion, habitual drunkenness, neglect of domestic duties for three years, imprisonment for three years at the date when a petition is presented and under sentence for at least seven years, cruelty.

New Zealand.—Adultery, desertion for three years, habitual drunkenness, cruelty, neglect of domestic duties, imprisonment for seven years, insanity, a decree of judicial separation having been in force for not less than three years.

Queensland.—Adultery, insanity, desertion.

Scandinavia.—Adultery, bigamy, or other grievous form of sexual conduct, venereal disease, cruelty, desertion, imprisonment for two years for any dishonourable crime, lunacy of three years' duration.

South Australia.—Adultery by husband or wife, unnatural sexual offences on the part of the husband.

Southern Rhodesia.—Adultery, malicious desertion.

Spain.—No divorce.

Tasmania.—Wife's adultery, or drunkenness, or cruelty, or lunacy; husband's desertion or habitual drunkenness, or adultery, or imprisonment under sentence of seven years, or cruelty or lunacy.

Turkey.—Adultery, ill-treatment, desertion, offence committed and undignified conduct, mental diseases, incompatibility of temperament.

Uruguay.—Adultery, cruelty or outrage, attempt by the husband to prostitute the wife, imprisonment for ten years, desertion, mutual consent.

Victoria.—Aggravated adultery by the husband, simple adultery by the wife, insanity, habitual drunkenness, cruelty or desertion.

# THE SOCIAL ASPECTS OF BIRTH CONTROL

By Mrs. J. L. Stocks.

IT is in some ways a fortunate thing that I did what one is sometimes tempted to do in the middle of August, and left the compilation of this paper to the fifty-ninth minute of the eleventh hour. It is fortunate, not because the result is a good literary polish, but because the politics of the question (to say nothing of its technique, with which we are not at the moment concerned) are now moving so rapidly that what one says on Wednesday is apt to be out of date on Thursday.

May I illustrate this by chronicling some of the outstanding events which have affected the problem from the social point of view during the past year:

1. The first incident worth recording is the action taken by the N.C.W. at its annual conference last October, when it passed, by a very considerable majority, a resolution asking the Ministry of Health to allow Local Health Authorities to give birth control advice in cases of medical necessity to married women in attendance at their public welfare centres. There was nothing new in a large organization of women taking such a step—the Labour women, the Liberal women, the Co-operative women had already voiced the same demand by sweeping majorities, and so indeed had the House of Lords. But the composition of the N.C.W. suggests that the traditional ecclesiastical attitude to birth control might profoundly affect it; and at any rate to the society which tabled the resolution the result was something of a surprise.

2. The second matter which I want to chronicle is a development rather than an incident—but it is a development almost exclusively of the past year. I mean the precipitation of the birth control question into the arena of practical local politics. As a result of an invitation for support sent out by the Shoreditch Borough Council, some fifty Local Health Authorities have petitioned the Ministry of Health to allow them to give

birth control advice through their welfare centres; and about a dozen actually decided to take matters into their own hands and give it. It is possible—I think probable—that the greater independence conferred on Local Health Authorities by the financial readjustments of the Local Government Act, 1929, may have had something to do with this apparent revolt against central control. These activities were greatly stimulated by a conference, consisting mainly of Local Government representatives, held in London in April, at which the medical and administrative aspects of the question were discussed as matters of practical concern.

3. Meanwhile another incident has—following what I have called the 'revolt' of certain Local Health Authorities—profoundly influenced the administrative aspect of the matter. The resolution passed by the N.C.W. is now out of date. Several weeks ago, a circular was issued to Local Authorities from the Ministry of Health, a circular somewhat entangled and very carefully guarded in its phraseology, but definitely extending permission for birth control advice to be given as part of the public health service, in cases where further pregnancies might be prejudicial to the health of the mother.

4. Finally, there is the development which is probably uppermost in the minds of most of my hearers—it is indeed hardly more than a week old—I mean the publication of the Lambeth Report with its definite recognition of central birth control as a morally legitimate means of securing family limitation where such limitation is undertaken for morally legitimate means.

5. And on top of all these developments (and I have instanced only three of outstanding importance) there is the change which has come over the Press. From being a taboo subject, birth control has become, for some sections of the Press at least, a headline and poster subject. The good side of this development is that it is no longer impossible or even difficult to secure serious consideration for serious proposals. Fear of being thought extreme or unrespectable no longer deters people from giving the best of their minds to this problem. The bad side of it is (perhaps I am a little Victorian in my views?) that

e question is blazed into the eyes of young people who should ve no concern with it.

Well, so much for this chronicle of happenings. I have ventured to retail it because it throws some light on the general mosphere in which birth control as a social problem is being scussed to-day. And now may I outline what is, as it seems to e, the social problem of birth control, and may I begin by efining terms.

There are, broadly, four methods of family limitation:

1. What is generally known as abstinence, *i.e.* the suspension of marital relations. And though it is perhaps hardly necesry, may I remind my hearers that such abstinence, if it is to hieve its object, must be complete. People sometimes talk of 'moderation' as though 'moderation' in sex intercourse were a ossible effective method of limitation. I don't believe that for e majority of married couples it is. It is desirable for its own ake; but it has little or no bearing on the problem of family mitation.

2. A perverted form of abstinence which is, I believe, universally condemned by medical opinion. Its scientific name is *oitus interruptus*, but it is generally described among working-ass women as 'being careful.' May I add that I think, looked from the moral standpoint, this practice is one which reduces e sex-act to its lowest physical terms. Yet it is very widely ractised among married people. How widely, I learn week by eek in conversation with women at our Manchester Clinic.

3. Various forms of abortion — from monthly dosing with psom salts to noxious drugs and illegal operations. Again I ay say that I learn week by week how widespread is the use of ich methods in their minor manifestations.

4. A group of methods commonly known as contraception. ome are condemned, some are recognized, and some are fought ver by the medical profession. It is, however, pretty generally dmitted that among these methods are one or more which are armless and effective. But it is, I think, also admitted that ontraception, if it is to be successfully and healthily practised, ould be practised under medical direction given individually

to the individual who practises it. Anyway, this last group of methods is what is generally indicated by the words birth control.

Now, as I see it, the social problem of birth control is how to grapple with a situation in which all these methods of family limitation are in widespread use — indiscriminate and often dangerous use — by all manner of people operating under all manner of motives, with all manner of results on health, happiness and social welfare.

Suppose you admit what the Lambeth resolution admits, *i.e.* that for certain people there is a legitimate need for family limitation, and that family limitation by method No. 4 is not ruled out; then you can narrow down the problem and say that the social problem of birth control is how to manage this indiscriminate and widespread movement in such a way as to secure, if possible, three things:

1. Some check on the use of any methods by people who have no legitimate need of them.

2. Some check on the use of wrong methods by those who have such legitimate need.

3. Some channel by which the right kind of method shall be made available to those who have a legitimate need.

But before discussing the possibilities of achieving these three ends, may I venture on a brief digression on this term 'legitimate need,' for there are a number of prickly controversies bound up in it. There are of course some people who consider that there is no positive problem at all, because, even where family limitation is called for, such limitation can and should be met by abstinence. (And remember abstinence means complete separation — not what is commonly called moderation.) Therefore the social problem of birth control is a negative one: how to oppose the use of all methods other than abstinence. To this the most common reply is that such abstinence, especially in the social environment of a slum, exacts a greater moral strain than ordinary people should be called upon to bear—that it is not, in fact, practical. There is, however, a growing tendency to frame a more positive and, shall I say, less cynical reply, and this tendency is strongly reflected in the Lambeth report. The more positive reply is that procreation is, if the primary

purpose, at any rate not the *sole* purpose of the mutual physical intimacy of sex intercourse, and that if you interfere drastically with the physical side of married life you may very seriously upset its balance and impose rigid reserves and restraints of emotional expression, with unfortunate psychological results. For my part, and speaking in the light of some very frank conversations with working mothers, I believe that the relation between a husband who is continually putting a great reserve upon his natural expression of an emotional relation to the wife with whom he is living in intimate contact, and the wife who feels that she is 'asking a great deal' of her husband, is not an easy one—often not a very harmonious one. But to say that is not to say that very many people, especially those who lead spacious and highly-developed intellectual lives, cannot carry off the situation and make a supreme success of it.

Well, once you have admitted this 'secondary' purpose of sex intercourse—admitted it, I mean, as a purpose with some moral claim for satisfaction—you have admitted the 'moral legitimacy' of a practice which allows married people to secure the secondary purpose at times when there are good reasons for avoiding the primary purpose. In so doing you part company with the official Roman Catholic position. At the same time you find yourself up against the vexed question of what constitutes 'legitimate need' for such a practice.

1. In its narrowest interpretation it implies medical need—the actual danger of a further pregnancy to mother or child. On a slightly wider interpretation, medical need would cover those cases where an addition to an overburdened mother's responsibilities would impose an exhausting burden. This, I think, is the interpretation of need recognized by the recent circular of the Ministry of Health. But at this point medical needs certainly begin to look very much like economic needs; for it may be physically exhausting to have a fifth child on £2 a week and not physically exhausting to have a fifth child on £2,000 a year.

2. But with economic needs you enter a very indeterminate field. I think that in practice anyone who would admit medical need, would admit economic need in cases of intolerable housing shortage, unemployment, or a wage patently inadequate for the bare necessities of a family of more than three or four children.

And it is only logical to do so, though as a matter of fact the Ministry of Health circular does not. But one man's luxury is another man's need, and at the top end of the social scale 'need' may be interpreted to cover a university education—or a standard of life which many of us would regard as pure luxury. Therefore I suppose that the only way out is the way indicated by the Lambeth Report, which does admit the legitimacy of both medical and economic need, but which leaves the interpretation of need to the individual conscience. I myself am inclined to take a fairly liberal view of what constitutes such 'need.' When a healthy young woman who is obviously maintaining a really good standard of life for a family of two or three children on a wage of round about £3 a week comes to our clinic for birth control advice, I regard her as a suitable candidate. I do not feel tempted to withhold that advice until she joins the ranks of the overwrought and overburdened mothers who constitute what might be called our 'show cases.' But that is perhaps because I would go a step further in the interpretation of 'legitimate need,' regarding it from the national as well as from the individual point of view—the view outlined at the beginning of the week by the Dean of St. Paul's in his Presidential address.

3. I need not dilate upon what you heard at first hand and what I only read in a press summary, except to point out that here we part company from the Lambeth Report. The bishops regard increase of population as excellent in itself—citizens for the State and potential saints for the Church. Dean Inge has suggested that under modern economic conditions, in a densely-populated area where the death-rate is under control as never before, the birth-rate must be under control too, and for larger reasons than individual welfare. He implies, I take it, that an increase of population is not necessarily always a desirable thing—that in the case of Great Britain in the year of grace 1930 it is even an undesirable thing.

Now with these diverse interpretations of 'legitimate need' in mind, let us return to our practical problem of how to get the right kind of information to people whom it is generally agreed have a legitimate need, without making it equally available to the wrong people, and how to prevent the wrong kind of information being disseminated at all.

As regards ordinary well-to-do married couples, I think the social problem is of a totally different order. They know the best kind of methods that are available and they are already widely using them. A low birth-rate and a good bill of health attest the efficacy of these methods. You do not often encounter the phenomenon of the unwanted child among the well-to-do. And where you encounter a large family, you may be pretty sure that large family is wanted, or else voluntarily incurred in the spirit of Christian resignation. It may be that from a eugenic point of view birth control is being too freely practised by these sections. If so, the remedy is moral suasion and the relaxation of economic pressure through tax rebates and family endowment. But the gates of knowledge are wide open and cannot be closed.

But what of the gates of knowledge which are open to those reprobates of all classes who are such adepts at protecting themselves against the results of immorality. Here the gates of knowledge are not only wide open, but flamboyantly advertized —by the rubber shops in all our larger amusement centres, and the extraordinarily obscene catalogues which circulate so widely —to say nothing of the works of Dr. Marie Stopes, eagerly read by persons for whom they were never intended. The bishops have suggested that these gates of knowledge should be closed by legal enactment. I greatly doubt the efficacy of such action. It has not been efficacious in France, the land of sex preoccupation. There are so many underground channels waiting to do the work. Meanwhile, how are you going to discriminate between those who have and those who have not 'legitimate need'? The trouble is that the more reputable the customer, the less readily will he or she be able to follow the penalized traffic into its devious underground courses.

But, it may be asked, where is the *positive* problem? With all this knowledge floating about, whose need is at present unmet? I am tempted to reply: that of the great mass of the working-class. It is not that they are not practising family limitation, or even family limitation by the method of birth control. They are. They are practising it by all four methods, and they are practising it in a haphazard and disastrous manner.

1. They are practising it by long periods of abstinence varied by 'being careful,' and in spite of much that has been said concerning the educative, purifying effect of self-denial, I don't believe that the effect of this kind of self-denial is in most cases educative or purifying at all—perhaps because in nine cases out of ten it is a one-sided and not a mutual self-denial. It is self-denial for the husband rather than for the wife, who is far less dependent on that particular form of emotional outlet. Thus it is often a self-denial which breeds compunction and nervousness in the wife.

2. Again, especially in the lower ranks of society, they are practising it by mild—and not always mild—forms of abortion, which are, I think, closely connected with our obstinate public health problem of sickness among married women. Here again I am speaking of what I know and have heard at first hand in hundreds of intimate conversations with working mothers, whose lives seem to be a kind of sequence of monthly crescendoes of anxiety. May I quote a homely but familiar phrase: 'Have I been caught?' That phrase expresses the spirit in which the seeds of human life are inadvertently sown in many homes to-day.

3. But, it may be asked, what about the contraception knowledge which the commercial agencies make so readily available? It is of course widely used—but badly used. Its use involves a vast traffic in appliances by post, instructions by pamphlet, and goods bought over the counter by persons who have the haziest notions of how they should be used. I don't suppose one would be very far wrong in saying that the result is about as unhygienic as would be the result of a postal traffic in standardized spectacles. And it has its economic aspect. The purchasers of these goods, being both ignorant and very needy, are at the same time very easy to exploit and are indeed exploited. To give an example: there is a small rubber appliance which, when ordered by the doctor at our Manchester Clinic for a patient who has been duly examined and fitted, is sold to her at cost price for 1/6. The commercial list price is 3/6 and 5/-. It is often sold over the counter to working mothers for 6/-, 7/-, 8/-, or even more. (More noxious remedies, such as abortiscent drugs, are sold at even more inflated prices.)

The trouble is, of course, that it hasn't really begun to penetrate to the great mass of the people concerned that this is a matter for medical advice at all. And I think that is partly the fault of the medical profession. It is certainly the fault of many hospitals. Hospitals are often extraordinarily reluctant to give such advice even in cases where they have urgently recommended no more pregnancies. Meanwhile, the ordinary medical practitioner is often very ignorant: only in very few cases has he received contraceptive instruction as part of his medical education. Thus to the ordinary working woman, a friend or a mother appears to be the proper person to ask, and the type of information thus handed on is naturally very unsatisfactory.

It is of course all these circumstances taken together which have inspired the movement chronicled at the beginning of this paper: the movement in favour of making suitable birth control advice, given through medical channels to married working mothers, part and parcel of our national health service—always, of course, with the proviso (long recognized in the case of sectarian education) that it shall not be forced upon persons who for religious or ethical reasons do not wish to receive it. I think that, given this proviso, the Roman Catholic community have no right to resist a public health development which commends itself to the moral and social consciences of their non-Catholic fellow-citizens. But the essential thing is, I think, in the case of that majority, to regard the provision of Birth Control advice for married persons with a 'legitimate need' as part and parcel of the Public Health Service in its preventive aspect.

# THE MEDICAL ASPECT OF BIRTH CONTROL

By C. J. Bond, C.M.G.

## The Influence of Birth-Control on Individual and Racial Health.

IF some inhabitant from another world were asked to report on the present state of human civilization, he would, I think, undoubtedly say that while mankind had attained a fair measure of success in acquiring control over natural forces and in developing a moderate standard of life, civilized man had, as yet, made but little organized, conscious effort to improve the quality of human life itself, or to ensure the transmission of higher capacities or better mental and bodily qualities to succeeding generations.

He would point, in support of such a statement, to the fact that the more civilized races and nations were mainly breeding from the less well endowed, and the less worthy sections of the population; and he would support his argument by an appeal to the facts revealed by the differential birth-rate in different levels of society.

If further he were requested to explain how this state of things had come about, how for instance it could happen that after two generations of national education, and a higher standard of life among all classes, there should be to-day a large and increasing amount of mental deficiency, to say nothing of a low level of physical development, vigour and health in the people of this country; and if he should be asked to go a step further and explain how, in his opinion, such a condition of deterioration could exist alongside of what seems to be greater wealth, growing control over natural forces, wider education and increased facilities for inter-communication with other nations, he would I think suggest as the fundamental reason the fact that while interfering with the old order of Natural Selection, by which, in the past, the less fit elements had been eliminated in the struggle for life, so called, civilized man had not so far

olved any adequate or organized method of artificial control er human breeding, and the production of human life. Now e underlying causes of this failure are primarily :

(1) Lack of knowledge.

(2) Lack of application of such knowledge as we do possess to right ends, that is to ends which are calculated to promote racial welfare.

It is no doubt true that far more care *is* taken nowadays by vilized societies to protect the lives of children *after* they are rn. This is to the good in so far as the exercise of the humani- rian instincts in human nature is concerned. Benevolence ould certainly be encouraged—but it must be a wise bene- olence which seeks to *prevent* as well as to *relieve* disability d suffering. But if, on the other hand, this saving of child-life indiscriminate in character, if no selection is made of children ted by innate capacity to become future citizens and, even ore important, future parents, then the exercise of mere bene- olence, without wisdom and without regard to quality in the opulation, is fraught with grave danger to the future. The ery fact that in one recent year 40,000 more babies were kept ive than in the preceding years has an important bearing on is point. Were these 40,000 babies of sound stock, we may k, were they endowed with that vigour of mental and bodily onstitution which is so important? I fear this cannot be said of l of them. The trouble is that much of our social legislation is -day not founded on sound biological principles. We help the eak at the expense of the normal citizen. But if innate capacity response to the appeals of industry and science, of art and ligion, is lacking, there can be no material or intellectual, no sthetic or moral progress. To sum up the present position, it I think true to say that our modern civilization has arrived at e parting of the ways. Civilized man is to-day called upon to ay a larger part in the control of human destiny. In order to rry out this great task worthily and successfully, man must ke pains to understand the situation, he must concern himself ith both the factors which enter into the problem, both with *ature* and with *Nurture*. Up to the present his conscious efforts control have been almost entirely concerned with the environ-

mental side of human life. Such then is the present position, and among the factors which concern this problem of *racial progress* and racial decay, one very important one is that of *Conception-control*, with which we are concerned to-day.

As is well known, it is only since about 1875 that this knowledge concerning the use of artificial methods to prevent conception has become widely spread among different sections of the population in this, and other countries. At the present time, as far as we can see, the practice of conception-control is exerting a *dysgenic* effect on the nation. This, however, is due to the fact that while the professional classes and higher social groups are limiting their families, the unskilled labour groups and the lowest and less intelligent section are breeding freely.

It is, however, with the effect of conception-control on individual and racial health that we are now more immediately concerned, and assuming that it is used in a right way, from worthy motives, and with right objects in view, then we want to know further to what extent, if at all, it is prejudicial to the health, domestic happiness, and welfare of those who use it.

We will preface our enquiry with a theoretical comparison between the general health and well-being of two imaginary samples of the population. One a sample taken from husbands and wives who are the parents of one or more children, and who, over fairly prolonged periods of time, have practised some method of conception-control; the other a sample taken from husbands and wives in whose case, for some physiological reason, or from some incompatibility of germinal fusion, the marriage has been childless, although sex-intercourse may have been normal in character and frequency.

I think in such a comparison the opinion of any family doctor, with a sufficiently large experience, would be, that if there were any difference in the health, happiness and well-being of the two classes, the advantage would be with the group, which, having produced a certain number of children, had also practised some measure of conception-control, rather than with the other group, containing the partners, especially the female partners, of childless marriages who had not practised any such methods. Such an opinion, if founded on a sufficiently large experience, would favour the suggestion that the practice of

nception-control does not tend to prejudice the health or happiness of those who practise it.

But it is necessary to consider this aspect of the problem in mewhat fuller detail.

Speaking generally, there can be little doubt that considerble benefit has been brought to bear on the mental and bodily alth of many an overburdened mother in a working-class home the removal of the constant dread of renewed pregnancy, by e use of one or other of the recognized methods of conception-ntrol. On this point Dr. Cox's experience as Medical Officer the Walworth Clinic (see p. 74 of the Report on the Medical spects of Contraception) is emphatic.

But it is not enough to enquire whether the practice of conption-control *in general* is prejudicial to health. It is necesry to enquire shortly into the effect on health of the different ethods used, both mechanical and chemical. Before doing so, owever, we must devote a few words to abstinence from sexual tercourse as a method of conception-control.

(*a*) Abstinence from Sexual Intercourse.

In the case of normally constituted persons living under the dinary conditions of married life, attempts to abstain from xual intercourse for prolonged periods may and do lead to rvous strain and ill-health, and may also lead in some cases the satisfaction of the sex-impulse by irregular means. The using conditions in many working-class houses also present a culiar difficulty at the present time.

(*b*) The Use of the Condom or Sheath.

This is probably the most effective method, so far as the prention of conception is concerned. It requires, however, care d intelligence in use. It has no observed deleterious effects on e health, local or general, of the husband or wife.

(*c*) Pessaries, etc., with or without chemical adjuvants.

The evidence already referred to in the Report on the edical Aspects of Contraception showed that, apart from the ficulty of successfully fitting such occlusive devices, in the wly-married, and in cases with perineal or cervical tears, local jury to the genital canal is at times caused by the continued esence of the instrument and sepsis.

(*d*) Douching with chemical substances in the form of lotions.

The evidence goes to show that the use of too strong or unsuitable chemical substances in various forms may cause interference with the normal acid secretions of the female genital passage, or may injure the vaginal mucous membrane. For the most part, however, the evidence suggests that any injury to local or general health is the result of the improper use of injurious and unsuitable substances. The temporary use under aseptic conditions of appropriate mechanical contrivances and the proper use of non-irritating chemical substances does not appear to produce any local or general disturbance of health.

(*e*) Coitus Interruptus.

This method, although very widely used, especially in France, appears to be unphysiological, and its continued practice in men and women of certain temperament may be associated with disturbances of nervous equilibrium, and may produce an unhealthy neuro-psychic condition in some individuals. It is, moreover, an unreliable method in many cases, as far as the prevention of conception is concerned.

(*f*) Graffenburg's Method, *viz.* the introduction of a coil of silver wire within the uterine cavity.

Though good results have been claimed for this method, it is too soon yet to speak dogmatically about it.

Research is now proceeding into the preventive value and effect on health of various spermatocidal substances in regard to which further practical experience in the human subject is desirable.

Speaking generally, there is indeed little or no evidence to show that, provided only approved and tested methods are used, any harm results to the health of the individual from the use of such contraceptive methods. We must now ask the further question, how far the use of such mechanical or chemical methods can be relied upon to prevent conception. Though a high percentage of successes, and in some cases a very low percentage of failures, has been claimed in the various reports issued by different clinics and by individual doctors, yet it is I think true to say that the more carefully the after-histories of persons who

seek contraceptive advice, and who practise contraceptive methods, are enquired into, over sufficiently long periods of time, the less conclusive becomes the evidence pointing to continued and complete success. In the Report on the Medical Aspects of Contraception already alluded to, the conclusion was reached (on p. 11) 'that an entirely successful contraceptive method, one that would be sure, harmless and simple, has not been discovered yet.'

Much careful research into the physiological and psychological conditions which attend ovulation and fertilization, and the relationship between them, is still needed, also into the action of various so-called spermaticides, along the lines indicated in the reports of the B.C.I.C.

In this connection I have been impressed with the results of the painstaking and intensive enquiry into the after-histories of some three hundred patients attending the Cambridge Clinic, as recorded in Mrs. Florence's recent book, *Birth Control on Trial*.

It is I think evident from this enquiry that much more research, both clinical and laboratory, is necessary before any final opinion can be expressed as to what constitutes the best method for preventing conception, not only for persons in comfortable circumstances and of average intelligence and skill, but also for persons living under the unfavourable conditions which attend married life in too many working-class houses, and among people whose education, training, and surroundings do not promote an intelligent appreciation of the need for constant care and diligence in carrying out instructions if success is to be achieved in preventing conception.

There is another aspect of the work done in Birth-Control Clinics which deserves notice. That is the 'discovery' of the large proportion of women attending these clinics who suffer from lacerations, prolapse, or other effects of abnormal parturition.

Thus one Report states that out of 10,000 women examined at the Mothers' Clinic, London, there were 1,321 cases of torn cervix, with a total of 3,164 injured women.

If there is an equal proportion of such cases attending other clinics, it is evident that our present methods for the medical

treatment of pregnancy and parturition leave much to be desired. Moreover, it is these cases of injury that account for a large proportion of the 'failures' at B.C. Clinics. The matter has received attention in the Government Report on Maternal Mortality.

A word may be added here about further possibilities in the future. Our knowledge is constantly growing about the powerful effects of radiation on the life and activities of the germ cells. Sero-cytology is as yet in its infancy, and it is also possible that, as our knowledge of the action of certain vitamins on fecundity grows, we shall be able by dietetic methods to control, to some extent, the cycles of ovulation and spermatogenesis.

In speaking of the effect of radiation of various kinds on fecundity, it is necessary to bear in mind the fact that radiation during the early stages of pregnancy may exercise very injurious effects on the foetus in utero. There is a growing body of evidence pointing to this conclusion both in animals and in the human subject.

There still remains the question of the effect of conception control on the capacity to produce normal germ cells capable of normal fertilization at a subsequent period. I do not propose to deal with this point in detail, and will only say that a considerable volume of evidence has been brought forward which shows that approved methods of conception-control properly used have little or no effect on future fecundity.

These and other like methods, however, more properly belong to that aspect of the problem which is concerned with the control of the production of male and female germ-cells, that is to say to *sterilization* rather than to the ordinary mechanical and chemical methods of conception-control, which are rather concerned with the prevention of fertilization after the egg-cells have been liberated from the sex-glands into the genital canal of the female. Thus it is partly because of the uncertainty of the results obtained by ordinary methods, when used by ordinary citizens, and their inapplicability and inadequacy in the case of irresponsible persons of low intelligence, and weak will, that I desire now to discuss shortly another method of conception-control, permanent and certain in its effects. I refer to *Sterilization*, which is especially applicable in such cases.

In speaking of sterilization as a method of conception-control, I am thinking only of vasectomy in the male, and salpingectomy in the female; not of course of castration in either sex. It is important that the public should appreciate this fact, that these operations do not lead to any loss of sexual vigour or, as far as is known, to any depreciation of mental or bodily capacity in either sex. It is true that in the male ligature of the testicular duct does prevent, not only the liberation, but also—eventually, no doubt—the production of living sperm-cells, but it does not interfere with the cells which produce the testicular hormone, *i.e.* the internal secretion on which the mental and bodily characters associated with maleness depend. In the female, ligature of the oviduct does not prevent the formation or the liberation of ova by the ovary, though it does of course prevent these ova from reaching the uterus or womb. Sterilization so performed by surgical operation, by blocking the ducts along which the male and female germs must pass to meet in fertilization, is in fact a mechanical method of conception-control.

In this connection the suggestion has, I understand, been made by American surgeons that if, after division of the vas in the scrotum, the upper end is *not* ligatured, the seminal fluid from the testis will be discharged into, and will be re-absorbed by, the cellular tissues of the scrotum and thus, since no back pressure is established, atrophy of the spermatogenic cells will not take place. Further evidence in support of this contention is I think necessary. Judging by the effect of the division of the ducts of other external secretory organs such a result is not, I think, probable.

Sterilization differs, however, from other mechanical methods of conception-control as ordinarily practised, inasmuch as:

(1) Its action is certain in preventing conception.

(2) Its results are permanent at any rate in the absence of a second operation to restore the patency of the ducts.

Now it is these two points—the *certainty* and the *permanence* of its effect in preventing conception, together with the further fact that it operates independently of the control of the individual sterilized, that makes sterilization peculiarly applicable

in the cases of irresponsible persons, of low intelligence, and weak will. We know that the mechanical and chemical methods of conception-control, as usually practised, depend for success on the constant exercise of intelligence, and care. It is this which makes such methods unsuitable in those subnormal sections of the population, and it is largely for this reason that conception-control is to-day exercising a dysgenic effect on our population. Sterilization (as above defined) is largely free from these drawbacks. It operates independently of the exercise of care, or intelligence, on the part of the individual, hence it is peculiarly applicable to the mentally defective section of the population.

Further, voluntary sterilization will, I feel sure, be the method of choice in the future in the case of 'carriers' of serious mental or bodily defect.[2] On the other hand, it is of course inapplicable where, for medical, health, or economic reasons, temporary prevention of conception is necessary in order to space out the family births at reasonable intervals.

I now wish to add a word about *Sterilization* as the most suitable method of conception-control in certain special cases.

### Blind Parents.

That is about sterilization as a method of preventing procreation in the case of persons who suffer from serious defects which, although not necessarily transmissible to offspring, yet render such individuals incapable of rearing offspring under normal conditions. Blindness in the case of both parents, in poor circumstances, constitutes such a defect.

My advice has recently been sought by a statutory committee charged with the supervision of the blind in their area. This committee, rightly wishing to discountenance the marriage of blind workers under their care, has passed a rule which provides that persons so marrying, without the consent of the committee, shall cease to receive benefit and employment by the committee, unless one or both parties to the marriage can produce a medical certificate that such a marriage will be childless. Two young blind couples, under the care of this committee, have expressed, in writing, their willingness to undergo sterilization and so com-

[2] That is individuals who, while not 'exhibiting' such defects in their own person, yet carry the seeds of defect in their germ-cells.

y with the committee's rule. Through the help of a sym-thetic surgeon, and at their own express wish, the male partner s undergone vasectomy in the case of one couple, and the male (a blind girl of unsound stock) the operation of salpin-ectomy in the other. One of the couples is now married, and the her will be married shortly.

In my opinion sterilization is the right method of conception-ntrol in such cases. It provides a certain, and life-long, curity against procreation; and such married couples do not se their employment, they do not depend on support from the tes; and the State is safeguarded against the risk of the birth children by parents who are not able to rear them under nor-al conditions.

Although our concern to-day is mainly with the effect of con-aceptive practices on health, I wish to say a few words con-rning certain objections which have been urged against the ractice of conception-control, on religious and moral grounds.

The Committee appointed by the National Council of Public lorals, under the chairmanship of the Bishop of Winchester Dr. Woods), after careful enquiry, issued a Report on the thics of Birth-Control in 1925. While agreeing in the main ith the findings in that Report, I may perhaps be allowed to raw attention to a short reservation, signed by myself, in which tention was drawn to the fact that abstinence from sex-relation-ip over considerable periods of time in married life (while aving peculiar dangers of its own) does not afford an adequate ternative to conception-control by artificial means in the case normally constituted, young married persons.

In my opinion, as stated on page 30 of that Report, 'The ghtness or wrongness of contraception must be a matter for dividual judgment, and must depend, in each particular case, n the *motives*, the *circumstances*, and the *effect* such conduct ay have on the individuals concerned, on the community, and n the human race.

The significant majority by which the important resolution assed at the Lambeth Conference, which recognized for the first me the rightness of conception-control under certain circum-ances, throws light on the movement of public opinion in this atter in recent years.

As far as the *biological* aspect of this subject is concerned, I may perhaps be allowed to draw your attention to my article on the biological arguments in favour of birth-control in the latest (14th edition) of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, vol. 3, p. 650 (*a*), in which the following passage occurs :

> 'The mental attitude which regards as immoral the exercise of any voluntary control over the production of offspring (otherwise than by prolonged abstinence which is impracticable, and may have serious consequences in the case of young, normally-constituted married persons), is one which fails to recognize the great change which has occurred in human evolution, whereby natural selection has been largely superseded by artificial selection under human control.'

The all-important thing is to guide this artificial selection into right channels, that is into channels which will tend to promote individual, communal, and racial welfare.

We may now sum up the conclusions at which we have arrived as follows. They are :

(1) The urgent need for the exercise of wise control over the production of human life in regard to quality as well as quantity.

(2) That the use of certain approved methods of conception control is not injurious to individual health, and when practised in suitable cases and for worthy ends may be rightly used to promote family and racial welfare.

(3) The inadequacy of ordinary methods of birth-control in the case of persons of low-grade intelligence, feeble will-power, and in those with innate anti-social tendencies, and those lacking in moral responsibility.

(4) Sterilization as a mechanical form of conception-control is the only appropriate method in such cases.

(5) Voluntary sterilization will in the future become the method of choice by persons who, while conscious that they are '*carriers*' of serious mental or bodily defect of a transmissible kind, and while rightly wishing not to be guilty of anti-racial conduct, are yet desirous of marrying.

(5) Sterilization (voluntary) is also especially applicable in special csaes, *e.g.* in blind persons, where although the chances of transmitting the defect to offspring may not be great, yet the special disability from which they suffer presents a serious obstacle to the upbringing of children under favourable conditions, especially in the case of parents in poor circumstances.

(6) If statutory committees charged with the care of blind persons in their area are justified, as in the cases already referred to, in requiring that any two blind persons liable to transmit the defect, and wishing to marry, must produce a medical certificate stating that such a marriage will be childless, before consent is given—surely the State is justified in requiring that persons who are liable to transmit serious mental or bodily defect offspring shall also undergo sterilization before marriage. The first step must be to bring about such changes in the law as are requisite to ensure that no obstacle of a legal or legislative kind shall stand in the way of the use of sterilization for eugenic reasons.

The next must be to remove any difficulties which at present deter surgeons from undertaking the operation of sterilization for right reasons, in right cases, and with proper safeguards.

In conclusion, may I say that I fully recognize that it is not enough to show that approved methods of conception-control do not prejudice individual health. Such is of course only to establish the negative side of the problem. It is also necessary to show that conception-control will enable civilized mankind to exercise control not only over the *quantity*, but also over the *quality* of human life. It is because we cannot at present do this fully that I have ventured to discuss the question of *Sterilization* which at any rate does hold out some hope of helpfulness in dealing with the mentally defective sections of our population.

Our fellow-citizens, rich and poor, in all walks of life, are calling for guidance to-day in this matter of birth-control and the right living of the sex-life. As I said in my broadcast talk last Friday, a racial conscience is being aroused and people are beginning to realize the folly and sin of breeding from the mentally defective section of the population. The time is ripe for a review of the position, and both conception-control and sterilization must be considered fairly and without prejudice.

# EUGENICS AND POPULATION

By Eldon Moore, Esq., Editor of *The Eugenics Review.*

THE main attention of this Conference is directed to the individual attitude towards problems of life and conduct. Your attitude generally, I take it, is, how can I personally meet this or that problem which will face me in my daily experience? My subject is chiefly concerned with the collective aspect, with the interests of the community. The qualitative aspect of population, the eugenic aspect, has really not very much to say to the ordinary person so far as his own private affairs are concerned. Notwithstanding popular superstition, there is little in the idea that eugenics means the application of the methods of the stockyard to human beings. Eugenics is really a national affair. As for the quantitative aspect of population, the rates of increase and decrease of the population, that is still less to us. To any one of you personally it may not be much, although it is a great deal to you as members of the community. My remarks therefore are addressed to you in your capacity as citizens, whose votes and personal opinions will play their part in guiding the British section of the human race. Birth control is one of those big questions bearing on the collective and qualitative aspects of population. The Lambeth Conference has recently been considering it from the moral point of view, but generally, while there is much talk on birth-control in the press, in the pulpit, and on the platform, all that talk is full of opinions, full of possibilities, and with very little fact behind it. It reminds me of the curious phenomena that while we are constantly discussing man as a citizen, man as a child, man as a producer, as a consumer, as an income-tax payer, man as a criminal, man as one and a hundred different things, we very seldom discuss him as a biological specimen, and yet that is what he really is. We neglect that essential aspect even though all these various activities of tax-paying, crime, and being a child are fundamentally controlled, though not ultimately determined, by those qualities inherent in his biological constitution.

But to return to birth-control. While we discuss its morality and possibilities, we seldom ask what it has in fact achieved in the past. People seem to take it for granted. It is calmly assumed that the fall in the birth-rate for the past fifty odd years has been due to contraception, and that the mere purchase of chemical pessaries or rubber goods is sufficient to prevent the birth of children. Now both assumptions are utterly unwarranted by the evidence we have. I do not say they are denied; what I am going to put before you is the evidence, so far as it is known, and to show you how unwarranted are a lot of the assumptions that are guiding, not only our opinions, but our legislation. The phenomena of population's increase and decrease are very varied, very complicated, and very little understood. I am secretary of an International Commission investigating the problems of differential fertility, and Professor Crew is chairman. Of the first four thousand questionnaires we sent out in the first stage of our survey, nearly all ended in a question mark. So little understood are these phenomena that one can almost assume that the obvious explanation of any one of them is wrong. Birth-control as an explanation during the last fifty years is very obvious: *a priori* it is probably wrong. Some in particular who retain the Malthusian theory attribute it to the Breslau-Bezzant trial. This generation, it seems to me, is accustomed to a growing population; we all are. We take it for granted when the Registrar-General's quarterly bulletins come out that we are going to see a rise in the population. There was much trepidation in the Press when for one quarter in the year, after an influenza epidemic, there was an actual decrease for that quarter. But if you look at England as it has been since William the Conqueror came over, you will get a far wider and juster view. A stable population, rising a little one year, falling a little another, is the normal thing, not only in England but throughout the world. The population of England grew very slowly from 1066 to 1801, when the first real census was instituted. We know there have been frequent vast increases for a few years and equally vast decreases; the Black Death probably decreased the population by half, possibly by two-thirds. In other words, the slow increase was periodically checked by plague or famine. After such an enormous increase as that of the nineteenth century, there-

fore, one would reasonably expect a period of stability or even of decline. Professor Bowley and others have prophesied that about 1940 we may actually expect a decline in the population. It may come, and if people take the same attitude that they do now to the birth-rate, they will feel the end of the world has come. It will be nothing to be alarmed about in itself at all.

But to return to birth-control, it should be noted that it was not the only new factor in the nineteenth century. Steam, sanitation, medicine, feminine emancipation, and prosperity, all new and all likely to be primary compelling factors in population increase. In my opinion, steam seems to be the most important of all. The correlation between prosperity and population's increase has never, I believe, been calculated, but in England it must be very high indeed—somewhere round .8. While the population quadrupled between 1801 and 1921, so did the real wages quadruple. The rate of increase of prosperity began to slow down about the time when the birth-rate also declined between 1870 and 1880. For the last twenty years the birth-rate has been practically stationary, but here is an important point. During these last few years, there has come to the unskilled workers a rise in the standard of living, and to the rest of the population consequently a relatively falling standard. These facts throw significant light on a differential birth-rate. The unskilled are the only class whose birth-rate has remained fairly high and steady, and whose sense of growing prosperity has been retained.

I now turn to some purely biological work. Professor Raymond Pearl, of America, started to do some rather peculiar and very interesting work on flies, and he took the banana flies, whose private life has been more investigated than that of any other organism on earth. He bred these flies in bottles and watched what was their birth-rate and death-rate in certain circumstances, and this is what he discovered; that, when you start with your first few pairs the rate of increase is rather slow, and then it gets very rapid and there is a low death-rate. The birth-rate then begins to fall and the death-rate to rise. He kept a chart and on it was always found a logistic curve. That struck him, because it not only discredited a popular myth in one bottle, but in many bottles. He then tried it on yeast-cells, and later on he jumped

right over to man and started to investigate the rate of population increase of the civilized states of the world and also of native Algeria, almost the only native state in the world where people are living under natural conditions and yet have their births and deaths checked by a civilized system of statistics—the French system. He found quite a large portion of the logistic curve and he found other portions in England, the United States, France, and so on; but the trouble is that when he takes a portion of that curve it may be one part and not another part of the jig-saw puzzle. There was the fact that increasing density was shown in many organisms to have some sort of effect, not only on the death-rate, but on the birth-rate. When Professor Pearl continued this experiment with two different varieties of the same banana fly he found their reaction to density was different in the case of each kind.

That is really important. What we, for instance, should call spacious freedom, would be appalling density to an Australian or a New Zealander who is used to a population of four to a square mile. Now, to turn to natural increase, there is therefore a considerable amount of suggestion that natural increase is regulated primarily by factors other than birth-control, such as density, prosperity, food supply, and so on. There is, however, the point that contraception may be a secondary factor. It may be that the as yet undiscovered laws of increase and decrease, and not methods, regulate results. It seems possible that if contraception had never been invented we should still have increased to the same figure of thirty-eight millions, only the birth-rate and death-rate would both have been higher. Contraception would have given us the choice of fewer babies instead of more coffins. That may be the case, but I rather doubt it. There is the falling birth-rate of Professor Pearl's flies and there are other biological factors which are rather too complex for me to go into at the moment.

Now, to turn to some of the more tangible causes. One that is very little noticed is the age of marriage. Carl Thaunder, whose book I recommend to everyone, has shown that there is a very high correlation between the birth-rate and the age of marriage. People who marry late have few children. Mainly due to the steadily increasing length of his professional train-

ing nowadays, it is more difficult for a young man to marry early than if he be a member of the non-professional classes, and these professional classes are those whose birth-rate has most fallen. The unskilled workmen reach their fullest earning capacity at an early age, and they are the class who maintain a high birth-rate, not as high as it was, but much the highest in the community. Some people say that the women in the upper classes are not so fertile as those in other classes. This is only superficially true. A normal woman's fecundity drops sharply after thirty, and the upper classes do not marry until the most reproductive period is well over.

Now for a little scepticism about birth-control. The belief in its effectiveness as a factor in controlling the birth-rate largely rests on the Breslau-Bezzant trial. It had no effect on the national birth-rate until 1876; also, abortion is ages old. It is difficult to get figures from birth-control clinics, but abortion is practised very widely in this country to-day. Two or three years ago I saw the figures of an insurance society in Berlin that insures working-class women, and the number of still-births and abortions exceeded the number of live births. Next, as I have indicated, the turn of the birth-rate took place too quickly after the Breslau-Bezzant trial for that to have had much effect. There is also another thing; the advocates of contraception partly admit that none of the methods are perfect, and if contraception was the sole check upon the birth-rate, one failure per couple per year would yield as high a birth-rate as any in the world. One act of forgetfulness, one badly-mixed chemical per couple, and you would have as high a birth-rate as you could possibly have.

There is not the least doubt that there are many other checks upon fertility. What they are is a different matter. The slowness and steadiness in the fall of the birth-rate is a reason for doubting that contraception has been the cause. There was a gradual reduction year after year in the mean size of the family. If contraception had been the cause, there should have been a sudden drop in the size of the family; this suggests a biological and not a social factor. There is a further thing that people forget, and that is that you get rises and falls in the birth-rate in other parts of the world in a way with which contraception could

not have anything to do. The South Sea Islanders are actually dwindling out of existence; they know nothing of contraception and in some cases they do not believe that man has anything to do with the child, and yet you will find these people are dying out, not because their death-rate is high. Their death-rate is not as high as it was, but their birth-rate is very much lower. You can turn to our own country, and there you will get a high birth-rate right in the very centre of a contraception area. These are further points to remember. I am of course putting before you a controversial case; at the same time I do not wish you to think that it is a point of view I am adhering to or that anyone is adhering to. It is a *critique* of assumptions which have been far too readily made.

But now we come across something that should be rather revolutionary. I have tried to show to you that this revolution in our social life known as birth-control has not really taken place after all. The other day a sex-congress was held at which mention was made of the Graffenburg-ring. It is the invention of an Austrian doctor. It appears to approximate to the safe and unobjectionable birth-control for which we have been waiting so long. What is its action is not agreed. Whatever it is due to, if it fulfils the promise, and the promise is good, we are now going to be presented with an absolutely safe and easy method of controlling our own fertility, and I personally am afraid of what may happen if it comes about. It is such a power as has never been put into our hands before. It has been tried in twelve hundred cases in Vienna without any failure, and in over two hundred cases in England with only one failure, the cause of which has not been investigated.

Birth-control may have prevented the birth of a great many individual babies. People who adopted birth-control when it first started took every precaution to use it properly; those people have probably lost in fertility as a result. It does have a very strong effect on the relative rate of increase on one type of human being compared with another, and the people whose birth-rate has fallen most have been the upper classes. I am not trying to draw a distinction in favour of them compared with the lower classes. It yet remains to be shown that the intellectual classes are, in themselves, any more valuable to the community

than the really good working classes. I am not confusing the working classes with the defective classes, although some people do so because sometimes they live in the same street. At the same time we do not wish the normal proportions of our population to change too drastically or too much. We wish to know what is happening inside the classes, and that is precisely what we do not know. It is taken for granted that the upper classes are less fertile than the lower, but we do not know whether this is due to the fact that there is a larger proportion of completely sterile persons in the higher and a smaller proportion in the lower. It is suggested by American figures that I have seen, that while the net birth-rate of a certain class is higher than that of another, the difference is due to the difference in the proportions of those who reproduce themselves quite a lot and those who do not reproduce themselves at all. It may be that the upper classes are being reproduced by only a few who maintain their fertility, while the others lose their fertility and die out. But there is one class in the community whose fertility has never fallen at all, and that is the highly defective class, and those are the people who make effective birth-control difficult. This is the most dangerous thing our community has to face. I have here the pedigrees of a group of families investigated in a certain county in England. The facts are absolutely unimpeachable and are gathered by those excellent persons the Poor Law officers and the Supervisors of the mentally defective. These pedigrees show the way in which these people tend to mate with one another. This is only one example out of nearly two hundred I have got here, and it is representative. There are 79 or 80 persons in the whole chart; of this number 21 to 22 are not known; of the remainder, 23 are normal, 27 mentally defective, four died young, four have either grave defects of physique or character. Eliminating the unknown and including the last three groups there are 23 normal persons and 35 defectives. If you had beef-cattle that produced no beef and got them together and encouraged them to reproduce, that is the sort of proportion you would get of utterly useless animals. That is the proportion we get with human beings. And those are the people who are unreachable by any form of birth-control whatever. Those are the people whose fertility has kept at its highest since 1876 and long

before, but before 1876 these people were subject to a very high death-rate. It is the death-rate to which evolution has been due; it is the death-rate, to which any progress we ourselves have made, is due, and during the last hundred years in which the death-rate has been falling, there has been a decline in the qualities of the population. They are small figures, but significant. The male stature has fallen by just about one inch since 1864, and although we have elementary education there are still four per thousand people, of those married every year, who cannot read or write. That is an indication of very low mentality. And during the last twenty years these defective people I have been describing have increased by exactly a 100 per cent. They have doubled not only because they do not use birth-control, but because their fertility has not fallen. At the same time in the falling of the death-rate there has been a larger fall in the death-rate of the sub-normal than in the death-rate of the normal. Those are facts you have to digest if you are to view these things as citizens and realize that birth-control is not only a matter of morality or social convenience. At the present time it is one of those many things of which we must take the fullest account if we are to be sure that the heritage that has been handed on to us is not handed on by us to our descendants in an inferior form.

# THE ACQUISITION AND EXPENDITURE OF MONEY

By H. G. R. Sellon, M.A., sometime Bryce Historical Student, University of Oxford, Lecturer in History in St. Andrew's University.

A TEST of the value and a condition of the permanence of an institution is the ease with which it not only adapts itself to new conditions, but also changes its views on matters of fundamental importance. A society which reverses the judgment it has formed and proclaimed in a past generation should not only be free from the charge of inconsistency and the betrayal of values, but should be congratulated for its elasticity of mind and openness of view which has enabled it to discard old fallacies or to abandon old truths that have ceased to be applicable to the practical necessities of present life.

This must certainly be held true of political institutions, in which permanency appears obtainable only through continual change, and in which identity of ideals is dependent upon the elasticity with which such ideals are adapted to changed circumstances. And this tendency would appear to be true also of those religious organizations which, not content with a mystical withdrawal from the affairs of everyday life, aim at participating in the work of the world and at influencing society in accordance with their beliefs. Such an adaptation of old principles to new circumstances must necessarily produce much uncertainty and many divided aims and councils. But such uncertainty and confusion should not be regarded as evidence of instability or decay. Stolidity is not the surest sign of vigour, and just as in the animal vitality expresses itself in an energy that may often appear ill-directed and unnecessary, so in the body-politic the existence of party-strife and divided councils is a sign of the energy of health, and not of the quiet which too often is the prelude to decay and death.

Thus the indecision and uncertainty which were often described as characteristic of the teaching of the Christian Church

upon subjects whose importance would seem to merit an authoritative pronouncement, would appear to be symptomatic not of decay but rather of the continued ability of Christianity to respond to the changing needs and ideals of the world. A system which issues a final and dogmatic pronouncement bearing upon the personal activity of every individual, can have little hope of surviving in a world in which the prizes of life must go to those nations and individuals that are most ready to discard outworn beliefs and methods, and that are most eager to face new and adventurous issues. Compromise is the guide of life, and no religion can hope for an extended sphere of utility—at least in the West—unless it retains its sanity by a close alliance with the thought and practice of the contemporary secular world.

If this elasticity—this absence of a rigid and unchanging dogmatism—is characteristic of Christianity at its best, and a condition of its survival and prosperity, then we may regard lightly the charge of inconsistency and uncertainty so often levelled against the economic teaching of the Church. For the Church to have attempted to enforce a regulation of the economic life of its members would not only have made that Church a drag on the development of society, but would inevitably have led to its sharing in that destruction which must overtake any society which believes it has found an unalterable rule of conduct and which sets its face resolutely against all change and compromise.

It would seem vain for us then to look to the teaching of the Christian Church in history for detailed guidance in the economic problems which face us to-day. Teaching there was, and at times a very clearly-defined economic ethic. But such teaching and such ethic varied with the varying needs and outlooks of the centuries, and it is impossible to detach them from their historical context.

One thing, however, is evident throughout the history of the Christian Church until the great Schism of the sixteenth century. There is an uneasy feeling of compromise between the natural human desire for money and the power and pride that money can give, and what was still vaguely—and at times perhaps almost instinctively—felt to have been the teaching of Christ and the primitive Church regarding the peril that the

possession of wealth must carry with it. However great the wealth of the Church may have been in the Middle Ages, however splendid the pomp and dignity that attended the Princes of that Church, the ideal of poverty continued to be held. Wealth might be flaunted both in the services of the Church and by its representatives, but such wealth was, in theory at least, considered to be held *ad majorem Dei gloriam*, in trust for God, and to be used for the greater honour of God. Personal poverty and frugality were still the ideal followed by the best and most representative ecclesiastics of this age, and it was not the power and dignity and courage which had distinguished the life of St. Thomas of Canterbury that most filled the thoughts of the monks who attended his body after death, but the hair shirt—symbol of the contempt for the riches of this world—that was found concealed under the splendid trappings of the archiepiscopal robes.

This much would seem clear then. Without entering into the vexed question of Christ's teaching concerning the ethics of wealth, it is certain that the best Christian thought of the Middle Ages viewed wealth with feelings of suspicion. Too wise—and also too human—to attempt to enforce either on itself or on the world at large an impossible ideal of abstinence from the pleasures of this world, the Church, in theory at least, tended to emphasize the perishable and even undesirable nature of worldly goods and possessions. It is hardly necessary here to draw attention to the useful results of this attitude of detachment from the world. A contempt for riches proved a comfortable shield for those who amassed such riches for themselves or their societies, and elementary principles of hygiene and personal and public decency languished for as long as the most faithful adherents of Christianity found their instinct for social service gratified not in fighting the foul diseases and pestilences of the Middle Ages, but in pursuing an ideal of abnegation and contempt for worldly goods under the filthy robes of the mendicant friar. What humanity has suffered from this ascetic ideal of Mediaeval Christianity it is impossible to estimate, but it is one of the most fascinating, as well as one of the most melancholy, of historical pastimes to reflect how much more advanced the western world would be in all that promotes physical well-being if more civilized views of human nature and its bodily needs had not been involved in the fall of classic civilization.

If this mediaeval conception of the nature of wealth can scarcely be said to have contributed to the welfare of mankind, little more can be said of the new views concerning property which were ushered into Western Europe by the Protestant Reformation. This Protestant ethic of money is still too much the subject of dispute among historians for it to be possible to assess it at all finally, but it would seem that the pre-occupation of some of the more prominent Reformers with passages from the Old Testament led them to as great a perversion of reasonable economic theory as that to which mediaeval theologians were led by too intense a dwelling on those New Testament passages which most represent Christ as condemning the possession of riches. The freeing of the labour market, stimulated as it was by the breakdown of feudalism, combined with the acceptance of the Old Testament belief that to the good man the good things of life shall be added, brought about the ethical and economic revolution which ushered in the capitalistic age. This new vindication of wealth was enormously strengthened by the Calvinistic and Puritan acceptance of labour and the acquiring of material profit as an almost sacred occupation, we might almost say as an end in itself. The regarding of poverty and suffering among the less fortunate members of the community with complacence was encouraged by the inherent fatalism of Calvinism and by the comfortable belief that a beneficent Providence might be trusted to bestow worldly goods upon those who by their faith and exertions had merited His kindly intervention.

From both these attitudes towards property, the mediaeval and the Protestant, the modern world has reacted violently, and its protest against the latter is perhaps the stronger and the more indignant. For the abuses and inequalities of wealth in the Middle Ages sprang from an attitude towards wealth which had much in it that appealed to the nobler feelings of men, and which ruled the lives of many of the more fortunately placed members of society. But the attempt to justify an obviously unjust distribution of goods in this world by the sanction of Providence, and the essentially Anglo-Saxon equating of work with religion still perpetuated to this day by that most absurd and heathenish of mottos, *laborare est orare*, have left behind a legacy of social and economic turmoil the full consequences of which our own unfortunate generation is experiencing.

For the foundations upon which both the mediaeval and the Reformation economic ethics were reared have now collapsed. No longer can a world-renouncing ideal attract the minds of educated Christians. Wealth and ease and leisure are recognized as good, good both in themselves and in the opportunity which they afford for living the Christian life and adding to the general sum of human happiness. And the fall of that Judaic theology which characterized so much of the teaching of the Reformers has deprived the more unfortunate features of the capitalistic system of their former defences, for he would indeed be unwise who would attempt to buttress up the modern economic order with the outworn rags of sixteenth and seventeenth century Protestant theology. Both the Catholic and the Protestant economic ethics have lost their power, and the majority of men rejecting both the belief in the divine over-ruling of economic forces and the world-renouncing ideal of an earlier age, clamour with increasing strength for a more equal distribution of the material goods of life.

What light has the ordinary Christian to guide him through the tangled paths of economic theories and disputes? He has no oracle of an infallible Church to listen to, and it is vain for him to turn for guidance to those New Testament passages dealing specifically with the problems of wealth, for what certain authority can a Palestinian, and possibly an interim, ethic have for our present social order, even if it were possible to disentangle a definite economic teaching from the confusions and contradictions which abound in the recorded teachings of Christ. Even if we were to accept the more radical utterances of Jesus as most typical of his doctrine, and were to regard the approval of poverty which appears so strongly in the third Gospel, and that denunciation of the rich which perhaps culminates in the epistle of James, as embodying the teaching of Christ, we might still be pardoned if we hesitated to accept an economic doctrine elaborated in Palestine two thousand years ago, and probably influenced by a belief in the imminent destruction of society, as in any way adapted to our own complex and over-populated Europe. And it is not even as if this ebionitic nature of many New Testament passages were characteristic of the whole. How can we reconcile such a passage as the so oft-quoted ' How

hardly shall they that have riches enter into the Kingdom of God' with the friendship which Christ showed to many well-to-do men, the readiness with which He accepted their ministrations, and His evident pleasure in participating Himself in the harmless pleasures of life?

Is it a wonder then that many earnest men and women feel lost among the mazes of modern economic disputes, and that when they refer either to the traditions of the Church or to the recorded utterances of Christ, they turn away disheartened and disillusioned, with the feeling that these traditions and sayings have no bearing on their present problems. The voice of Christ seems to have become faint and uncertain.

> 'Thy voice comes strange o'er years of change—
> How can we follow Thee?'
>
> 'Comes faint and far Thy voice
> From vales of Galilee.
> The vision fades in ancient shades,
> How should we follow Thee?'

Is not this disheartenment due to the old mistake of believing that the solution to every specific problem and difficulty is to be found in the teaching of Christ, and that textual study of the Gospels can afford an answer to every question that may be put? Such an easy guide to the Christian life is, as we know now, not to be found. But the general tenour of Christ's teaching abides. However textual and historical criticism may make futile our recourse to the New Testament for detailed guidance in specific cases, the general Christian obligation to consider in all our actions the good of the community is not lessened. But the task of applying this Christian morality to everyday economic life has to be borne entirely by the individual. And this task is one that faces the individual ceaselessly, since, in the complicated relationships of modern life, the simplest of his actions may affect for good or ill the lives of his neighbours.

It is probably no exaggeration to say that the greatest issue before humanity at the present time is the struggle between two views which, economic though they appear to be at first sight, involve two fundamentally different conceptions of man and his place in the world. One of these views is that personality is the greatest thing in life, that the individual is the culmination

of the evolutionary process, and that any limitation of the development of personality and individuality in man is a sin not only against the race, but against that Power from whom the soul is born. Against this view we find the rising tendency to think in terms of numbers and majorities, to consider the general well-being of the whole race rather than that of the individual, and —in an effort to redress the inequalities of life—to bring up all to one common level, forgetful of the fact that such an effort can, owing to the inevitable forces of economic law, only result in bringing down the higher levels of personality to one common and uninspiring level of mediocrity.

Now I am far from suggesting that the men who hold this theory of denigration are not actuated by the purest and noblest motives, or that there is not much to be advocated in favour of such a theory. The manifest injustices which are latent in our social system and the fact that under it the majority can never hope to have the wealth enjoyed by the few, are only too clear and obvious. But we do not live in an even potentially perfect world, and while human nature retains its divine characteristic of ever desiring more than it has, there does not seem to be the slightest chance of the world ever satisfying the desires of men. While we may thankfully observe the growing protest against the inequalities of our social system, since that protest is a sign of the growing feeling of responsibility among men for their fellows, we may yet be pardoned if we view this movement with a certain fear lest in the emphasis which is being increasingly laid on the common brotherhood and interdependence of mankind, we lose sight of that which, as it seems to me, it is the peculiar glory of Christianity to have borne witness to, the sacredness of the individual and his right to the fullest development of his personality.

Now if personality is the greatest and the only creative thing in life, property must be held to be indispensable to it. This fact seems to me too clear and obvious to need discussing. All the forces of human nature in history and pre-history point the lesson that man is an acquisitive animal and that when the power of acquisition is denied him, his personality must to that extent be atrophied.

And, moreover, this necessity of property is admitted by

every school of thought at the present day, for the most staunch champion of the denigrating school which aims at bringing all men's possessions to a common level does so in the name of property, in order to afford a larger share of property to every man.

But, it will be said, just because the possession of wealth is necessary to man if his personality is to grow, he must be protected against his stronger or more unscrupulous fellows, and for this reason the acquisition of money cannot be left to the unfettered will of the individual, but must be checked by the State. The freedom of the individual must be checked in the name of individuality.

I see two grave objections to this view which, to my mind, constitutes, in its more extreme forms, a danger to civilization.

In the first place, the free acquisition of wealth is criticized because it leads to an unequal distribution of the total wealth of the community. I admit that this inequality can be too great, and that when it is too great it can and should be remedied by social taxation imposed by the State. But the unequal distribution of money seems an inevitable consequence of a fact of life with which we are all familiar, but which has become increasingly unfashionable since the close of the eighteenth century, I mean the inequalities of human nature.

The believers in a past mythology saw nothing insulting to the angels in believing in the existence of hierarchies in heaven. We, however, for some not very clear reason, shrink from admitting the existence of hierarchies among men. But the fact that men and their potentialities are not equal remains, and also the fact that the development of the race depends to an immeasurable degree upon the more gifted and energetic members. This has always been so in the past, and it must be so still more in the future, in a world whose over-population must call for greater organization and scientific skill than was necessary in previous ages. Human society, whether it likes it or not, has reached its present development through a system of rule by aristocracy, and it must continue under such rule or it must perish. I use, of course, the term aristocracy in its widest, and —if I may be pardoned the confusion of terms—the most democratic, sense.

Now wealth is both the reward and the token of aristocracy. Men want some reward for their labour; they need some visible incentive for their toil; they desire, and this desire is perfectly natural, the social standing and respect that their accomplishments merit and which, we must confess, their possession of wealth will most surely secure to them.

Viewed thus, wealth ceases to be mere material dross. It is the outward sign of the successful use of man's personality and abilities. It is the interest on the talents delivered over to the keeping of the Faithful Servant. It is the translation of spiritual and intellectual values into material terms.

This incentive and this reward are destroyed[1] if too great a check is put on the free acquisition of wealth. Discouraged and subjected to suspicion and abuse, the more successful members of the community must slacken in their efforts. And what I am most concerned with here is not so much the immediate economic effect that this must have on the community, but rather the check that it must be on the development of those higher qualities in the race that are most manifested in a few individuals. So important is the individual, and so much is that importance in danger of being lost sight of at the present day, that one is at times tempted to indulge in an exaggeration and, reversing a saying uttered on a former occasion when an Individual was sacrificed to the many, declare that it may be expedient that the community should suffer for the Individual.

The second ground on which free acquisition of wealth is criticized is the fact that the less successful individuals must be protected against their more active fellows. I agree with this statement of the problem, but if the remedy usually prescribed for it—State regulation of incomes—is accepted, such acceptance amounts to a confession of the failure of Christianity—its failure to regulate the economic relations between men by the spirit of Christian love and courtesy working through the freedom of the individuals' will, rather than by the impersonal action of the State.

Not that I would condemn State regulation of industry and charity as unchristian. The immense development of this side

[1] I allude, of course, only to earned wealth, since the question of inherited wealth does not fall to be discussed here.

of the State's activities during the last century is a clear triumph of Christian principles. But I feel that the growing claim of the State to control the economic activity of the individual is a poor substitute for the free and uncontrolled following of Christian teaching by the individual in his economic relations. That such unfettered freedom of economic activity on the part of the individual may constitute a danger to the good of the community we must undoubtedly admit. But I cannot view with feelings of great enthusiasm the prospect of a fool-proof world in which the individual is deprived of all potentialities for harm by an emasculation of his freedom of action and by the consequent stunting of his personality. It is not in such a safe and regulated world that the human virtues both of endurance and of charity can be found. Man's development demands the opportunities for self-conquest and sacrifice which can only be afforded by a society in which the exercise of free-will is to be found, and in no sphere of human activity can this be found so challengingly as in the economic order.

We would appear then to be thrown back upon a recognition of the right of every man to decide for himself in what way he shall acquire his wealth. It would be a reduction to an absurdity to suggest that he should be free to acquire this wealth in ways that, in the opinion of the community, are positively dangerous or undesirable for his fellows, and it is clearly the State's duty to check any undesirable activities of this nature. But in all cases where the pursuit of wealth does not constitute a positive danger for the State in whole or in part, the individual would seem to have an undoubted right to pursue wealth according to his desires. On him rests the responsibility of deciding how far that pursuit shall take him, and to what ends he shall devote his gains. If he decides to apply these solely to his own pleasure, the decision affects himself only. It is not the concern of the community, for we surely no longer believe that a man's earnings are so much taken from some general pool of wealth. It may be that he will make a grievous mistake by such use of his wealth. It may be that he will gain all the world and lose his soul. That is a matter between him and God. The community has no call to interfere, provided that he injures himself only, for a man's vices do not concern the community, but only him-

self. If he decides to apply his superfluity to the relief of his less fortunate fellows, if he tries to redress the existing inequalities of fortune, if he frees himself from too absorbing a pursuit of gain, he will surely have his reward. But the reward will be due to him because he freely and voluntarily followed the higher path, and not because he was constrained to do so by any overruling power. We may well believe that he who will lose his life shall save it, but one may hesitate to believe that salvation shall be the lot of him who pays his income-tax because he fears the sanctions of the law.

What principles shall guide the Christian in his expenditure of money? Here, again, it is impossible to deduce any definite rules and regulations from the teaching of the New Testament. But it is clear that the greater the possessions a man may enjoy, the greater is his duty to use them according to the teaching of Christ. 'How hardly shall a rich man enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.' Not because of the mere fact that he has riches; not because the temptations that beset a rich man are greater than those which assail his poorer brethren, but surely because the rich man, freed from the daily care of eking out a small income, shall be judged by a more exacting standard than the poor man, whose limitations and difficulties shall be taken into account. The rich have their privileges, and for this reason they have heavier responsibilities than those which fall on the poor. This seems to me to be the true interpretation of those difficult New Testament passages in which Christ appears at times to reprove the rich for their possession of riches. It is not a reproof to the rich, but a warning which sounds from Galilee.

But in the consideration of the expenditure of money we are not mainly concerned with the more wealthy members of society, but with all who have an income sufficient to afford them some superfluity above the satisfaction of the more urgent and pressing needs of life. And in the modern world—at any rate in Western Europe—this class of men embraces all or nearly all the community. We are nearly all, in varying measures, capitalists, and we are thus all subject to the warnings which Christ uttered concerning the proper use of our superfluous wealth, though, admittedly, in varying degrees.

Perhaps one of the most characteristic marks of the Christian ethic as opposed to other moral systems is the emphasis which it has always laid on the necessity for a sharing of one's wealth with the poor. Not, of course, that this duty was not taught by other systems of religious thought, but Christianity first made charity a matter of fundamental importance. 'Save those who are in tribulation, lift up the fallen, feed the hungry, comfort the faint-hearted.' Such is the Christian duty as described in the First Epistle of Clement of Rome. The followers of the Gospel of love must translate their common loyalty to their Master's teaching into the visible form of material aid given to the needy brethren.

This duty incumbent on the Christian, that he should give of his superfluity to the poor is too obvious to need discussing. But the position of charity and almsgiving in the Christian life is not so simple as we might be led to believe from the sayings of some social reformers.

It was the Jerusalem Church which, as it would seem, took most literally the commands of Christ concerning charity, and the consequence was that this Church itself became before long dependent upon the alms of the more practical Pauline foundations. While we recognize without question the necessity for charity if we would follow the teaching of Christ, we must also remember the evil results which too blind and indiscriminate a following of this teaching may have. Much of the wretchedness and poverty of the Middle Ages must be ascribed to indiscriminate charity, the results of which must, as Lecky reminds us, 'withdraw multitudes from all production, encourage a blind and pernicious almsgiving, encourage habits of improvidence among the poorer classes, paralyze all energy, and prove an insuperable barrier to material progress.'

The fact is that we are faced by a dilemma. The great advantage of wealth to a Christian is that it gives him the opportunity for relieving distress among his fellows and, by thus bearing the burdens of others, fulfilling the law of Christ. Thus, the existence of poverty and distress which call for relief becomes of distinct value, since it is the means whereby many men who are placed in a fortunate economic position can rise to a

true acknowledgment of their Christian duties. The evil of poverty and suffering is the material out of which is woven both the charity of the giver and the gratitude of the recipient.

It is only too clearly true that the best of human virtues often spring from the sense of interdependence and responsibility which the relief of poverty produces. But it is true that much of the suffering which the last two thousand years have seen, much of the heartburnings among the poor, many of those social upheavals and disturbances which have convulsed Europe in the past, and the subdued rumblings of which can be heard to-day, must be attributed to the complacance with which Christians have tended to look upon poverty, as the necessary means whereby divinely ordained charity can be exercised. The swarm of beggars gathered round the steps of the mediaeval cathedral, foul in their rags and sores, were an outrage against humanity and an offence crying aloud to heaven. Yet they had a recognized place in society. They were, we might almost say, a profession. They were the necessary instruments whereby the Christian could be charitable and justify his soul before God.

Now there is something clearly wrong in this whole view of the matter. Poverty and disease are evils, and no power can make them into anything else. And to defend the existence of poverty because it gives the Christian an opportunity for exercising charity is sheer blasphemy.

The habit of indiscriminate charity must thus be held as contrary to the best interests of society. It tends to perpetuate the existence of gross forms of poverty, it encourages idleness, and it may produce more resentment than gratitude in the recipient.

Yet charity remains binding on the Christian, and it is the peculiar mark of this age that it is so conscious of this obligation. But the exercise of private charity must be regulated, and it is unquestionably as much the duty of the donor to be cautious in his charity and to make sure that it will be used to good advantage as it is his duty to give of his wealth to the poor. Indiscriminate almsgiving, by perpetuating the evils which need to be cured, can do as much harm to the community, though perhaps not to the donor, as the most complete selfishness.

With this urgent note of caution, we must recognize the duty of every man to relieve want and suffering out of his superfluous wealth. But the exercise of private charity must in our present time be limited by two considerations.

The first of these is the increasing part played by the State in the relief of want. In former centuries, when almsgiving was almost solely the work of the individual, the moral obligation on that individual was exceedingly strong. We must, if we are honest, recognize that it is no longer so strong. I have said already that it is out of our superfluity that we are called upon to relieve the poor. That call is now obeyed even by the man who never contributes to any private charity. As our contributions to the expense of State-directed schemes for the relief of the poor grow heavier, so our obligation to contribute to the private relief of the poor grows less. We are not obliged to pay in income-tax a sum equal to, and more probably surpassing, what we would ordinarily give in charity, and yet still continue to assist privately in the relief of want.

The truth is that the State is laying so increasingly heavy a burden on the taxpayer, in the name of social services, that the time seems to be coming when we shall have to ask ourselves the question whether a revolution in the life of both the community and the individual has not taken place, and whether the exercise of charity and almsgiving has not been taken out of the hands of the individual and transferred to the State. I cannot altogether condemn those men who, in their wills, declare that they leave nothing to charity, since their obligations in this matter have been fully discharged by their cheques to the Inland Revenue Commissioners.

Now I am largely prepared to admit that this revolution may be not only inevitable but even advisable. The State may perhaps be better qualified to distribute relief than the individual, and in such a national administration of alms there is not the same element of occasionally degrading patronage that may exist in private relief. But the unfortunate feature about this new development is that the onus of being charitable is no longer on the individual. The wealthy man is no longer faced by the salutary duty of having to devote part of his money to the helping of his fellow-men. When he gives relief he is im-

pelled to do so, not by his conscience, but by the Collector of Taxes. Responsibility is shifted from the individual to the State, though the individual can, of course, still exercise a diminutive amount of responsibility through the infinitesimal influence of his parliamentary and municipal votes. There is something unfortunate in this eclipse of the individual. The Story of the Good Samaritan would lose much of its charm if it became the Story of the Good Ministry of Pensions.

Yet I can see no escape from the situation which faces us. We must confess that Christianity has failed in so far as the private generosity of the individual inspired by Christ's teaching has not succeeded in relieving much of human suffering. The State is now assuming the functions which the individual had formerly to exercise. It may be more efficient, but we cannot help regretting that the old commands to give to the poor, to feed the hungry, to tend the sick, are no longer binding on the individual as they once were. He still does these things, but through an intermediary, and the human touch is lost. He still does these things, but by command of the State and not in obedience to his conscience.

The giving of both public charity and of what private charity we may still feel inclined to indulge in is affected by yet another important consideration. No man or community is called upon to endure beggary by an excessive exercise of charity. And it is the positive duty of both the individual and the community to make sure that the relief of want will not ultimately result in still greater want. The poor must be relieved, but because they are individuals, and because by relieving them they will become able to develop their potentialities. This is the only reason for and justification of charity.

Now this reason is not being kept in mind at the present time. We are relieving those who often do not attempt to take proper advantage of assistance. We do not discriminate between those who will profit from relief by increasing their own usefulness and that of the race, and the shiftless and idle members of the community who hang like a millstone round the necks of those who are both willing and able to improve their condition. The indiscriminate nature of modern State charity is thus bringing about the same result as the individualistic charity of

the Middle Ages. Before we can recognize State control of relief as superior to that of the individual, the State must abandon its present reckless scattering of largesse.

We are all willing, I am sure, to contribute to those schemes of social reform which will raise both the individual and the nation. But the continuance of such social reform is dependent upon other reforms which it is the duty of the State to embark on. Such necessities as the segregation or sterilization of the hopelessly unfit, and the encouragement of birth control among those individuals whose economic position calls urgently for the limitation of the family, are absolute essentials if we are to continue to devote a large amount of our income to social service. We are willing to help in building up a healthier and happier nation. We are not willing to throw our money into an abyss of incapacity and disease, which might be bridged over but for the persistence of obscurantist prejudices about the most ordinary facts of life.

This seems, then, to be the conclusion that we must reach concerning the question of how far the individual is still bound to contribute to the relief of want. His duty to do this is determined by the extent to which he has to contribute to the social services of the State. How far he wishes to devote his income to the care of others when his payment to those services has been made is for him to decide, but it is clear that he cannot be bound in any way to give more than a definite total amount. And even his duty to contribute to State relief would seem likely to be determined increasingly in the future by the willingness with which the State embarks upon reforms which will ensure that the vast sums spent annually upon social service produce a lasting benefit on the community, and do not have to be classed largely as unproductive expenditure.

Provided that the State recognizes this condition, which is the only moral basis upon which it is entitled to call for the taxpayer's money, I think we may view with a certain equanimity the devolving upon the State of the functions formerly belonging to the individual. The loss of the old personal feelings which existed between the giver of charity and the recipient may be compensated for by the loss of the former surely undesirable relation of dependence with which this was involved. The ideal

of society is not the dependence of one section of the community upon the other, but rather a growing feeling of the interdependence of all the parts. And this is, I feel, the aim we must have before us; but it must once more be emphasized that this aim seems quite unattainable unless we call increasingly to our assistance our growing scientific and biological knowledge and apply it to those racial problems which are the origin of many of our economic troubles.

I have suggested that the individual is only bound to contribute out of his superfluity to the relief of want. This brings us to the question of what is reasonable and necessary expenditure. I do not think that many modern economists will be found to endorse the rigid distinction drawn in older works on political economy between productive and unproductive expenditure, meaning by the latter that class of spending usually known by the vague term of luxury spending. That the purchase of articles of luxury contributes as much to employment and the circulation of money as any other form of expenditure is obvious, though we may admit that the stimulus sometimes fitfully given to certain luxury trades may, when fashion changes, add, not to the total of unemployment, since the money is transferred to some other trade, but to undesirable fluctuations in the labour market. But it is quite beyond the power of the consumer to gauge the effect of such luxury purchases. Besides, the aid given to employment by the creation of new luxury trades has been too well illustrated by the recent economic history of England and France, to name only two countries, for us to believe that expenditure on luxuries need in any sense be unproductive.

Besides, what is a luxury? I do not know of any economist who has satisfactorily answered this question. I suppose that from the strictly economic point of view all that does not actually feed and clothe the body is a luxury. The truth is that the rise of civilization and culture is intimately bound up with, and indeed dependent on, the growth of what some moralists may please to call habits of luxury, but which the student of history sees to be necessary for the progress of the race. It is a false and vicious morality which condemns the spending of money on articles whose only purpose is to give pleasure to the senses. This is a morality which, attacking those sensual experiences

through which many have seen glimpses of a beauty not of this earth, condemns as immoral, or at least unnecessary, that appreciation of earthly beauty which is one of the noblest marks of man.

Besides, the definition of luxury expenditure must vary from man to man. What is a luxury for one man may be a necessity for another, and a necessity if he is to find that ease and balance of mind without which the best creative work is an impossibility. But I do not wish here to lay too much emphasis on the importance of such work. We live in an age in which the general tendency is not so much to underestimate the importance that work plays in the forming of character, but rather to forget at times that the ultimate end of life is not work but the development of the soul, and that in this development well-regulated pleasure plays a most essential part. One reason for the essential place of property in the life of the individual is that it gives to him that measure of luxury which he needs for the development of his personality.

Any rigid distinction between so-called necessary expenditure and expenditure on articles of pleasure is thus to be deprecated. Provided that a man meets the essential requirements of himself and his dependents, that he saves a sufficient sum for guarding against old age and unforeseen eventualities, and that he bears his proper share of the burden of national and social service, he is clearly entitled to spend his money upon pleasure, the justification of which is afforded not only by the fact that it assists him in the more serious side of his life, but also by the quite sufficient fact that it affords him gratification and a relaxation from the cares of his daily round. The only proviso that need be made is the obvious one that such pleasure shall not entail injury to those who minister to it. And the present tendency is for the State to give increasing attention to this matter.

That this view of the essential rightness of a fairly liberal luxury expenditure by both the individual and the public as a whole is borne out by the teaching of Christ seems clear to me. Nothing is further from the attitude of Christ than a narrow preoccupation with the material needs of life. He who incurred the reproach of gloomy moralists by His fondness for amusement and good cheer, He who turned aside from the cares of the

world to see the lilies in their beauty, He, no one surely can deny, gave a proper place to that element in human affairs which has no justification apart from the pleasure it brings and the relief it affords to the burdened heart. The relief of actual material want is essential, for we may not forget that the appreciation of the finer things in life is dependent upon the satisfaction of the more material needs; but we may not, on our soul's peril, become entirely absorbed in the most urgent housing scheme, or the most pressing relief measures, to the exclusion of a due expenditure on pleasure both for ourselves and for the public. The observance of due proportion in all things, even in the regulation of our charity, is not wanting if we analyse the Christian teaching.

And here we come to what seems to be the very core of the economic teaching of Christ. It is a profound sanity, a ceaseless insistence on the paramount necessity of never forgetting that there are many values in life and that some are greater than others. Wealth is good, and luxury is good, both in themselves and in the opportunities that they afford the individual for enlarging his personality; but they are not the supreme things in life. Good though they be in themselves, yet their chief value lies in the fact that they are means to an end—the perfecting of the soul. As long as we remember this, wealth and its enjoyment are excellent things; but the moment that we value them more for themselves than for the aim that they serve, then the warnings to the rich uttered by Christ become applicable to us. As long as our wealth serves the needs of the soul, so long it is good; but it ceases to be good at the moment that it assumes a dominant place in our lives. Harnack said, 'The Gospel is not one of social improvement, but of spiritual redemption.' This does not mean that social improvement is not of vast necessity, but it is secondary to the supreme object of the Christian message, the saving of the individual soul.

Thus the Christian doctrine of wealth and its uses would seem to include much that was characteristic of both the mediaeval and the Reformation ethic, and yet to differ greatly from both. Like the mediaeval ascetic, it recognizes the supremacy of the spiritual as distinguished from the material life; but unlike the ascetic, it does not oppose these two aspects of life, but realizes their interdependence. Like the Reformation economist, it admits the nobility of work and the importance of wealth,

but it refuses to equate worldly success with sanctity. Recognizing that wealth is a two-edged weapon that can assist or wound its master, Christ utters a definite warning that those who are in any way possessed of wealth must either master it or abandon it.

This is the ideal of Christian detachment. The realization that wealth and all that wealth can give—nay, more: all that the whole world can give—can never satisfy or save the soul of man. The danger latent in the possession of wealth is that we may come to value it so highly that it becomes an end in itself to the obscuring of that end which is not of this world, and that we must seek vainly in the things of this world:

> 'It were a vain endeavour,
> Though I should gaze for ever
> On that green light that lingers in the west.
> I may not hope from outward forms to win
> The passion and the peace whose fountains are within.'

Not a complacent detachment from the world, with its inevitable train of selfishness and social unhappiness, not a foolish disregard of the high part that wealth and worldly prosperity play in the attainment of the spiritual life—that is not the Christian economic teaching, but its very reverse. But an insistence on the secondary place of wealth and of the things of this world in the life of the soul, and a recognition that as the individual not only uses but also values his possessions so shall his spiritual advancement be helped or hindered.

Such is to me the true meaning of Christ's social teaching, and it seems to me that the best trends of our modern social and economic thought meet there and are synthetized. The righteous modern protest against the abuses and absurdities of asceticism as well as the growing modern recognition of the claims of mysticism both meet in Christ's teaching, and are there seen to be not antagonistic but merely different aspects of the outlook of the Teacher Who, while so alive to the urgent claims of the Economic Man as to be claimed as a fellow by many leaders of our more advanced economic thought, is also the Master of the mystics by His insistence on the paramount claims of that spiritual life which, while it need in no way conflict with the enjoyment of the material pleasures of this world, yet is uncompromising in its claim that we should 'seek first His Kingdom and His righteousness.'

# THE ETHICS OF GAMBLING

By the Rev. H. G. Mulliner, M.A., Vicar of North Stainley and Domestic Chaplain to the Bishop of Ripon.

A CURSORY glance at the history of gambling in this country suggests that while the practice has remained fairly constant among the wealthy, there has been an ebb and flow among the nation as a whole. The last turn of the tide may have been when State lotteries were abolished in 1826. To-day there is a veritable spring-tide, nor does it show any signs of turning. Let us look at the tide, which casts it spray even on our Churches, before we decide whether it has any right to be there!

It is difficult to give both a brief and fair picture of the present gambling habit. From evidence laid before the Select Committee of the House of Commons on the Betting Duty in 1923,* and from other more or less trustworthy sources, the following facts seem to be worth noting. The turnover of betting on horse-racing exceeds the sum of £200,000,000 a year and is handled by some 4,000 credit and racecourse bookmakers, and by some 6,000 street bookmakers. To these must be added their clerks, agents, runners and others, making an army of about 50,000 men, who, with their wives and children, live on the profits of horse-race bookmaking. Some of the credit bookmakers are large firms: one has a capital of £120,000 and employs upwards of forty clerks; another has a telephone bill of £2,300 per annum and a postage bill of £1,250. But more significant from the social point of view are the street-bookmakers. It is said that there is no factory in which you will not find their agent, and that not content with doing business through public-houses and small shops, their agents often go round the houses of a morning to collect the bets of the housewives. It is not unusual for children to take the betting-slips to the bookmaker, and there are shops where the children may make their penny

* Summarised by E. B. Perkins in *Betting Facts* (S.C.M. : 2/-).

bets. A retired Glasgow bookmaker reckoned[1] that in a poor area of 10,000 people, where he had worked, there were seven bookmakers, and the bets they received would amount to about £250 a day during the flat racing season of 1920. The impersonal method of the Totalisator seems likely to decrease the profits of bookmaking but increase the amount of betting. It removes the fear that the bookmaker may fail to pay and that he is giving shorter odds than he might do.

As far back as 1913 the Football Association set up a Commission of Enquiry into football betting. They reported, 'Players themselves have taken part in it: coupon betting on football has become a serious menace to the game.'[2] To-day it seems likely that football coupon betting amounts to many million pounds a year. Canon Peter Green,[3] to whose thirty-five years' study of gambling this paper is greatly indebted, records how he stood outside a Burnley Mill and declared to a crowd that the football bookmaker had received £1,500 a week for the last three weeks from that mill and its two neighbours, and that he had not paid out a single penny. 'I am standing here for ten days, and anyone can contradict me who likes,' the Canon said. No one did, for he had it from the man's own runner.[4]

Nor are horse-racing and football the only sports in which gambling is common; we should have to add many others, of which the latest is greyhound racing, and which includes pigeon-flying, whippet-racing, and athletics. There are gaming houses and roulette tables; there are sweepstakes and raffles without number. Our streets are placarded with the information that '£1,000 must be won,' in some newspaper or magazine competition. Much money is won and lost every evening at bridge and other card games. Nor, in spite of the efforts of leaders, are all the transactions on the Stock Exchange and Cotton Exchange of a sound business character.

Alongside this increase in the extent and methods of gambling, can be put the common assertion that there are few even-

[1] cf. *Ibid*, p. 74.
[2] Quoted Glass, *Gambling and Religion*, p. 16.
[3] See his book, *Gambling and Betting* (S.C.M. : 1/6).
[4] *cf.* Perkins, *ibid*, p. 87.

ing newspapers which can pay their way without publishing betting news.[5] We may be quite sure that the increase in gambling is not due to the greater activity of the few, but to the greater number who gamble. If this was all, the situation, though perhaps deplorable from a moral point of view, would not constitute a grave social evil. The evidence of clergy and police and social workers and others goes to show that there are a considerable number who gamble seriously and lose far more than they can afford. The Sheffield Police went so far as to say both in 1913 and 1923, that 25 per cent. of the poverty in that town was due to a very large extent to gambling.[6] The Home Office in evidence before the Select Committee declared that a large proportion of offences of dishonesty committed by first offenders are due to the same cause.[7] On yet another side a big employer declared that it would be worth a 20 per cent. dividend to stop gambling owing to its effect in spoilt work and less production.[8]

Looking at the situation very broadly, and excepting the small class who gamble to such an extent that they can only be regarded as mentally unbalanced, we might divide the nation into three groups. (1) Those who do not gamble at all. (2) Those whose gambling is really of the 'little flutter' kind. (3) Those who gamble seriously, risking money which should maintain their standard of living, or else should have been invested to their own and the common good. My impression, for what it is worth, is that these three classes are roughly equal in number; the smallest is certainly the first.

## II.

The variety and extent of modern gambling, which I have tried to depict, have a bearing on the ethical question. Not only do they reveal that we have here to deal with a practice more widespread than some who do not themselves gamble sometimes realize, but one from which social evils result. The ethical question which it raises is this. Is gambling wrong by reason of these social and personal consequences, or is it wrong in itself? Is it to be classed with drink or with theft?

[5] cf. *Ibid*, p. 112.
[6] cf. *Ibid*, p. 97.
[7] *Ibid*, p. 12.
[8] *Ibid*, p. 92.

We may start with the definition of gambling which Dr. R. H. Charles gives in his most helpful book, *Gambling and Betting*[9]:

> 'Gambling in its simplest terms may be defined as an appeal to chance with two ends in view. The first end is by such an appeal to give expression to man's inherent love of sport or adventure, the second to determine the ownership of property.'

Gambling originated, Dr. Charles suggests, when a primitive man found that a stake whetted his love of the game, which was dying in his adult life as it dies in the life of animals. The ideal of playing the game for its own sake is a high one, and aims, in part, at a return to the purposeless playfulness of childhood as an experience of recreative value.[10] Gamblers, who love to be called sportsmen, find it harder to do this than do others. It is because we all find it hard just to play the game for its own sake that we are tempted to bring to our aid the instinct of self-assertion, which finds its expression in the glorification of victory or the gaining of another's wealth. How often at the bridge-table do we hear the remark that if there is not something on, people will not play carefully. This may have truth in it, but it is a confession of failure, nearly always of others than the speaker. And in this failure we defeat our own ends. For the recreative value of a game lies in the diversion from serious adult life, including money-making, to a spirit of light-hearted playfulness. In so far as the gambling interest enters, the recreative value departs. The most that can be said is, that to play for small stakes *may* be better than not to play at all.

The second motive for gambling is the love of adventure. I doubt whether the psychologists would rank the love of adventure as an instinct, but this daring into the unknown is something natural to us, and has been and remains necessary to all human progress. It is a good thing in the sense that it is part of the make-up of a true man, but it is moral or immoral in relation to the particular end he is at the moment pursuing. A man may adventure with risk to himself to save his friend's life or to rob him. Those who defend gambling simply on the ground that it is a mark of an adventurous spirit, speak idly. There is no virtue in the mere fact of risk. But the recognition of this motive,

[9] T. & T. Clark, 1/6.
[10] *cf.* W. McDougall, *Outline of Psychology*, ch. v.

while bringing us no whit nearer the ethical question, will help us to understand the deep forces which lead to gambling. We may further reflect that the love of adventure might have more socially dangerous forms of expression among all classes, and that gambling is an outlet for those whose lives lack this element. Some will remember how Philip of Macedon is said to have encouraged the Greeks to gamble because it corrupted their minds and made them docile under his rule.

The prospect of gain which gambling holds out brings into play another and stronger motive, that of self-interest. Some may plead gentlemanly indifference to the stakes, but the strength of the convention about debts of honour speaks with a louder and truer voice. For many, this is or becomes the dominant motive: they deplore the risk and hope to get the other man's money. Of course, the desire for money is not wrong in itself, and money means to many who have little enough of such things proper food for their family, the upbringing of their children, and natural and harmless pleasures. Once more we are led to appreciate the strength of the forces behind the gambling habit, and are but little advanced to the ethical question. Yet there is a warning here; as Christians we shall agree that we live in an age to which the command to lay up for ourselves treasure in heaven has become almost meaningless. The Christian will rightly see in the growth of gambling a symptom of a common spiritual misvaluation of money and an aid to the continuance of the error.

There is another cause of gambling which is partly the motive of proving oneself smarter than one's neighbour, and partly is a simple need for mental exercise. For many, their work, or lack of it, does not furnish enough outlet for their mental energy. The education they have received has left them at a certain level of mental alertness, without the capacity of selecting and following worthy objectives of intellectual interest. Thus they find their chief mental life in some of the slightly skilled forms of gambling. They can imagine no better criterion of intellectual superiority than the winning of a bet, unless it be in repartee, nor have they the detachment which coldly perceives the measure of luck which enters into their success. Every parish priest knows these people; sometimes their gamb-

ling is no more than the hope of being a first opened crossword; sometimes they apply their minds to little except horses and cards.

This paper does not pretend to analyse exhaustively the motives of gambling, but the motive of doing as others do may be added as the determining factor in many cases. To take part in a little flutter is almost a convention of our society. Even clergymen are expected to play bridge for small stakes if they have not got a reputation for being hopelessly Victorian. Nor is this paper concerned with the external causes which lead to gambling. Much has been made of bad conditions of life which lead to *ennui* and so to gambling. There is truth here, but the habit of explaining away our vices by references to environment is demoralizing, and only a half-truth at most. Christians have always believed that man has a real measure of freewill, and the power of response to moral appeal is a demonstrable fact. Those clergymen who work in slum parishes are daily envigorated by the comradeship of noble men and women who live under the worst conditions.

## III.

Any gambling transaction raises in the first place two ethical questions. Ought I to risk this money? Ought the other man to risk it? And on the Christian answer to these questions very many gambling transactions are straightway condemned.

As Christians we make the Doctrine of the Stewardship of wealth the criterion by which we judge all questions of personal expenditure. We view a man as holding his life and all that he possesses—his gifts, his wealth, his influence—in trust from God. And we believe that of all these things he must give an account, of every idle word and every idle coin. Our duties to ourselves, our family, our neighbours, our Church and State have many claims upon our money, and all in their due proportion. Our criticism of those who spend excessively on anything, is that they are spending money which is morally assigned to other purposes, may be their own fuller or future well-being or their families' needs, or the welfare of others. This applies to money spent on gambling, and also money risked on gambling. We may no more risk what is morally not for that purpose than risk money which is legally not ours to spend. Even when there

is a comparative superfluity of wealth, and money which can be risked without neglecting obvious duties, it is one thing to put money into a risky business enterprise which may bring reward to ourselves but also will be of definite social value, and it is another thing to risk money on gambling which has by its nature no social value except as a form of national amusement and results economically in a mere re-distribution of wealth. That seems to me to be the ground of our condemnation of all excessive gambling, and it applies as much to the wealthy who gamble in hundreds of pounds which should be invested or given to charity, as to the man who risks his children's food and clothes on the latest rumour about a horse.

There are many believers in a little flutter who place themselves within the Doctrine of Stewardship. They claim that they only risk at gambling what they should rightly spend on their own recreation. This class is represented by a lady who said that her bridge cost her £10 a year, and she thought she got a great deal of recreation very cheaply. Such Christian moderation may rightly command the respect of all, but of itself it is, of course, no argument for gambling. I could hardly defend my being drunk by assuring my Bishop that it only cost me 12/6. We have still the question: Is it a right form of pleasure?

But granted that we can afford to lose the money, the question arises, can the other man afford to lose within the same Doctrine of Stewardship? To the Christian this must be every time a real question. For Christians are bidden to be men 'not looking each of you to his own things, but each of you also to the things of others.'[11] He will accept like any other man the working rule that a man must look after himself. But he knows it is only a working rule and not the whole truth. 'Am I my brother's keeper?' was a murderer's question and is, I fear, often a gambler's. Once more this does not condemn gambling, but it is becoming a little difficult for a Christian to gamble.

Gambling, says Dr. Charles, has the end of determining the ownership of property. Mr. J. L. Paton[12] says bluntly:

> 'Gambling is a kind of robbery by mutual agreement, but it is still robbery; just as duelling, which is murder by mutual agreement, is still murder.'

[11] *Philippians* II, 4.

[12] Art. in *Enc. of Religion and Ethics.*

That seems rather strong language for the class of most moderate gamblers we have in mind, but it indicates a truth. Gambling has this in common with theft, that it results in gain to one and loss to another. Someone gets something for nothing. In this it differs totally from that normal method of determining the ownership of property which economists call exchange, and which is in essence exchange to mutual advantage. Gambling shares with the method of gift the fact that one gets something for nothing. But it is no free gift. A gift is a moral act and has, as Jesus suggests in the saying, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive,' a definitely mutual element. All gifts, for example inherited wealth and pauper relief, have a power to corrupt us by blinding us to the primary condition of our life on this planet, namely, in the old words, 'By the sweat of his brow he shall eat bread.' We do not for this reason condemn gifts, for they bear their own corrective in the good heart by means of a growth of affection and a sense of obligation. But money won at gambling has all that corrupting tendency without these moral correctives.[13] It is at least amoral. It disregards the moral law in determining the ownership of property. Such disregard for the moral law seems at least retrogressive, and at worst a denial of God. We might go further and assert that in so far as there is a desire to get something for nothing, it is immoral. Some have argued that the moral face of gambling is saved by the fact of a mutual agreement and the risk incurred. Do not burglars the same when they work in pairs! There is no virtue in a mere contract to risk something. More hopeful is the defence that gambling has a moral end in the mutual pleasure it gives, as in the case of the man who says, 'I don't mind so much about winning, but I like the excitement.' This is a much sounder line of defence so far as it goes: the trouble with it is that it does not go very far. I doubt if it covers a half per cent. of gambling transactions. The pleasure of the flutter is not in fact comparable in degree, for the normal man, with the pleasure of winning money or the pain of losing it. And if this is a fact, then to win at gambling is gaining our pleasure at the expense of another's pain. Upon this ground Herbert Spencer condemns it.

[13] Dr. Johnson defined it as a mode of transferring property without any intermediate good.

The heart of the ethical question is the legitimacy of the appeal to chance. Our definition ignores that element of skill which enters into some forms of gambling. And I believe rightly, for when skill does enter, it is subservient to the element of chance. It usually takes the form of skill in judgment when—as in most cases of bets on horses—there is not sufficient evidence on which to form any judgment at all. Even in card games such as bridge, the run of the cards in any evening allows fools to win. And if the result in a gambling transaction was surely predictable by one party, it would not be a gamble but a cheat: if by both parties, there would be no bet, for no one takes a bet on a certainty. Again, if it was wholly a matter of skill, it would not be a gamble, but perhaps a prize given for skill. In point of fact, the forms of gambling are by no means of this character. Rather, in order to bet men seek out chance events; gambling is the enthronement of chance. A chance event is simply one which is outside the powers of human prediction in the given circumstances. In gambling we want this element of chance to prevail. The essence of a bet then is ignorance. Civilization is not built on ignorance, nor is religion, though we confess, *Omnia exeunt in mysterium.* Thus to exalt our ignorance is to behave irrationally. It is to deny the gift of reason. It is not surprising that gamblers are notoriously superstitious and that quite nice Christian people sit on their handkerchiefs or turn their chairs when the run of the cards is bad. Often in affairs our knowledge does not enable us to eliminate all the risks, say, of a business deal. But our rational purpose is to eliminate as many as we can, and all if possible, while in gambling we deliberately base our action on the unpredictable. And further, when in business affairs we cannot eliminate the risks, we insure. Insurance is utterly different from gambling, for the risk is unavoidable, while in gambling it is sought for; in insurance our purpose is to cover ourselves as far as possible from the risks and their evil results; in gambling we open ourselves to them. At root then in gambling we allow our ignorance to determine the ownership of property. It is a retrogression to an irrational attitude. It is simply to play the fool.

I have tried to follow whither the argument led. Whither has it led? We have found that gambling not only has social

consequences in our own midst, in poverty, in crimes of dishonesty and in economic waste, but is in its very nature amoral and irrational, and therefore is liable to weaken the none too strong moral and rational powers of mankind; further, since we are prone to sin, we are very easily led by this habit into indifference to others, into an idle desire of reward without labour, and to a demoralizing passion for excitement. In view of such facts, some may conclude that gambling is wrong. Yet, although these facts may constitute very sound reasons why you and I, being no better than we should be, should not risk becoming worse by gambling, they do not prove that gambling is wrong in itself. Nor does this conclusion follow from the fact that gambling is amoral, for much in life seems in practice to be of that character. Still less does it follow from the fact that gambling is irrational. It is a playing the fool. But there is a place in life, though it be a small one, for playing the fool! There is also no fool so complete as he who plays the fool without knowing it. That is my complaint about gamblers; they play the fool without knowing it. An unpardonable error! A little flutter can be amusing and quite harmless, but the conditions of its innocency are hard—the stakes must be negligible, the pleasure of the flutter must for both parties really exceed that of winning or losing, its spirit must be light-hearted and frivolous, it must be a playing the fool. Let it become serious in any aspect, and it becomes downright immoral. My conclusion, then, in a loose phrase, is that gambling is wrong in proportion as it is serious.

## IV.

Reverting once more to the social aspect of gambling, there are four considerations with which this paper may conclude.

(1) Change in social habits, bad and good, is often brought about by changes in other social factors, apart from the recognition of the habits as good or evil in themselves. Now gambling has its primary motives in the love of adventure and in self-interest. It may be that when we have put our economic house in order, and our system gives more scope to more men for enterprise and initiative, and holds out a greater certainty of reward for increased effort, then we may find that the habit of gambling

has decreased because the psychological forces, which are at the back of it, will then be finding more expression in a man's work than is often the case at present.

(2) There is, secondly, the direct method of dealing with a social habit by State action. Those who share the views expressed in this paper and have noted the social evils resulting from gambling and its power to debase character, will have no doubt that any State action should be of a repressive kind. There are several such proposals in the air; some would forbid all betting inducements in the Press; others would increase the penalties and modernize the law to make it effective in new conditions; others would tighten up the law so as to prevent such evasions as sweepstakes and raffles. Such repressive legislation can hinder the practice of a vice, and sometimes does good, especially if it be the expression of the moral conscience of the nation. But I agree with Canon Peter Green that legislation is at present neither possible nor desirable. There would be no force of public opinion behind it.

(3) When we turn to the Church, which always might give a lead on moral questions, we find divergent practice and opinion among its clergy and laity. So long as parish churches are willing to supplement their funds by raffles and the like, the influence of the Church against the gambling habit is likely to be negligible. The small and well-intentioned practice of Church raffles not only encourages, though slightly, the habit of gambling amongst Church-people, but weakens that Christian habit of straight-forward giving, looking for nothing in return, which is one of the glories of Christian character. As a policy for those who have to raise money, it may be tempting but it is monstrously short-sighted. It is also costly: the motor-car which is given away as a prize in a hospital draw is a considerable subscription. In my own experience the prizes at church whist drives have become larger and larger, until the point appears in sight where the value of the prizes given by the few will exceed the entrance money paid by the many. And to return, so far as the Church is concerned, people still believe that what the Church permits is sure to be morally harmless, and our license in this

matter gives encouragement and excuse to a habit of gambling which grows in some natures all too easily.[14]

(4) Of course a Christian, on the views of this paper, may rightly gamble—under certain conditions which are rather unusual. Many of my Christian friends do. My own last thought is that there is here one of those cases where the words of St. Paul may be rightly applied. 'All things are lawful, but all things are not expedient,'[15] and 'Let us not therefore judge one another any more; but rather judge ye this that no man put a stumbling block in his brother's path.'[16] For we are faced with a craze which has patent evil effects both on our social life and on the spiritual life of individuals, while on the view here taken, gambling is to us strictly a matter of indifference—if it is serious, it is wrong. The world God has made offers us many other forms of pleasure, more recreative and more interesting. The phrase to play for love has come in our day to mean to play for nothing, rather than to play for love of the game. It would be something done, were Christians to give the phrase its true content.

[14] On this point it may be of interest to quote the Declaration adopted by the Wesleyan Methodist Conference in 1925:—

'Inasmuch as a clear and unmistakeable witness on the part of the Church is essential, the Conference, while reminding the Methodist people that gambling of every kind is expressly forbidden in all Methodist church buildings, reaffirms its strong disapproval of raising money for religious or philanthropic purposes by any means in which the element of gambling is involved. The Conference expressly declares:

(*a*) That raffles are not permitted in halls, schools, institutes, or other premises forming part of our Church buildings.

(*b*) That guessing and other competitions which involve the method or principle of the raffle are also excluded.

(*c*) That the raising of funds for Methodist Church purposes by means of raffles, gaming, or by any method which involves gambling, is not permitted under any circumstances.'

[15] *I. Cor.* x, 23.

[16] *Rom.* xiv, 13.

# THE CLAIMS OF BEAUTY IN MODERN LIFE

By the Very Reverend Hewlett Johnson, D.D., B.Sc.,
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SEVERAL years ago I took a group of artizans abroad. Two moments stand out. The first was in Amiens in the very early morning. Four of us had visited the cathedral before the journey to Paris. We entered by the south transept door, and at the very moment when the early summer sun had mounted above the horizon and was drenching nave, choir and transepts with golden light. Piercing the northern rose window, the rays shot upwards in flaming shafts into remote recesses of the vaulted roof magnifying its grandeur. My friends uttered never a word; rooted and speechless they stood; face to face with something utterly new and utterly moving.

The second moment was when we detrained at a small hamlet and found ourselves in Switzerland and right on the shores of Lake Lucerne. Standing beneath the closely-polled limes by the water's edge we looked out over the shimmering lake towards the distant girdle of forests and snow-crowned peaks glowing in the strangely ethereal light of a Swiss noontide. Again my friends stood rooted and silent. In this case and in that they were directly confronted with things of transcendent beauty and knew it—the beauty of nature and the beauty of art—and both came as a fresh and startling experience; something which heightened, glorified and purified life; something which gave an approach in, and through, the visible, to an Otherness which was invisible. Awe, reverence, silence were the only appropriate response, and they were instinctively made.

For at bottom this experience of beauty is a religious experience. And these high moments only serve to focus and carry up to the level of consciousness the kind of reaction which beauty always produces in receptive minds. Through beauty we move towards God and God moves towards us. Beauty is sacred. It is a divine avenue down which God passes to the human soul. For beauty is as really an attribute of God as goodness is, or

truth. And beauty is a quality stamped indelibly upon the world, a revelation of its inner nature. Beauty in the world is as independent of my eye that sees it as is the beauty of Purcell's music independent of my hearing ear. But beauty and my eye have, nevertheless, an affinity the one for the other.

Beauty again is more than another aspect of the merely useful, as the utilitarians declare. It has an absolute value of its own. And consequently objects of natural beauty are sacred things. In like manner objects of created beauty are inspired things; and indeed the very perception of beauty is itself, in a secondary sense, both creation and inspiration. These things and the like have been told by thinkers and poets from Plato to Wordsworth. They are the underlying assumption of all I have to say.

But these are just the things which the religious world has been too prone to forget; and having done so it has learned all too readily to acquiesce in an ugly civilization. It has even permitted the ugly and the vulgar to invade the realms of worship. Most churches built during the last hundred years, for example, in industrial Lancashire are depressingly grim without and within. To see them recalls to my mind the question of the small boy who was dancing by his mother's side towards the seashore on an August day in a bright Welsh watering-place. Suddenly he stood stock still, and chilled and silent whispered, 'Mother, why do they need a church here?' His eye rested on a hideous chapel of Ruabon brick. It recalled the terrible churches and chapels of the industrial Lancashire town whence he came. They, and the circle of religion bound up with them, struck him as totally incongruous with the bright beauties of sand, sky and sea. The child's remark constitutes a fierce criticism of that divorce between religion and beauty which is characteristic of other places besides nineteenth century Lancashire.

Surely it is time for us to enlarge our notions of the avenues by which God moves towards the human soul; time to see that beauty and truth, as well as goodness and right conduct, are avenues to God. To isolate one, and ignore or despise the others is ruinous. Russia supplies the warning note. Prior to the war we heard the boast that the Russian Church could dispense with science, knowledge and enlightenment; it could be said without

shame that there were in Russia bishops who were hopelessly ignorant men. Russia was in reality a truth-starved people. One hundred millions and more were illiterate. Even to-day, so I am told, there are priests in country places who oppose the scientist when he counsels the farmer to sow his seed-grain deep and thus take precautions against drought. Priest opposes scientist because the scientific mode departs from the custom of the forefathers, and seems to them to show a lack of faith in God. Time has brought a terrible revenge, and we can in some measure understand, however much we may deplore it, why the rulers of a truth-starved Russia regard scientific truth as the one and only road to reality and the one and only means of human salvation.

Thus it is disastrous as well as sacrilegious to block any of the avenues of God. And scientists perhaps, like the rest of us, need in their turn to be reminded of this. For the pursuit of scientific truth is more dependent upon ethical considerations than some scientists perceive. Pasteur could not travel far along the road to truth, save for the team-spirit of the world in which he lived. The accumulated knowledge in the books upon his shelf; the inherited methods of chemical research and analysis, and the delicate instruments lying ready to his hand, are but symbols of an age-long and world-wide team-work; and the power to work in teams rest in the long run on ethical achievements; on goodness, self-sacrifice and righteous dealing. And when we turn to individuals themselves we feel instinctively that the scientist unmoved by ethical or artistic considerations is cold and inhuman, and the ethical man untouched by the love of truth or beauty is a sorry companion to live with; and that the mere artist is, in the neat phrase of Dean Inge, never quite a gentleman.

We need not look far to trace disaster in places and times where the avenue of beauty has been ignored by some men, and denied to others. Vulgarity and revolt are the inevitable results. And signs of both are present in our own industrial civilization.

There is no need here and now to enlarge upon the blatant vulgarity of materialist acquisitive societies. But I must say a word, in passing, on the vital connexion between ugliness and the spirit of revolt. For it is in our great industrial areas and amongst the sun-starved, beauty-starved populace that revolt

most easily and perhaps most rightly springs. I recall vividly my own feelings as a young engineer in a large industrial town. My early youth had been spent in the country. I had seen cottage and manor, rich and poor, dwell peacefully side by side. I recall no feelings of revolt. Life was not ugly. I was as happy in the peasants' cottage as in my own home. Both had a beauty of their own. But suddenly plunged into a community where men, women and children were condemned to life-long ugliness and gloom, whilst the wealth they helped to create departed to distant country homes and beautiful suburban villas; it was then that I awoke to a sense of outrage.

So too was it with the other revolutionary spirits whom I met in those works. They were not coarse men, nor covetous; they were certainly not materialistic; in the main they were idealists, men of aesthetic natures, who hungered for a beauty which was out of their reach and out of the reach of their fellows, and especially out of the reach of the children of that community.

I strongly suspect that this *malaise*, and its accompanying revolt, still exists wherever the fountains of beauty are ignored and its waters denied to masses of men. And I have reason to believe, too, that much hostility to the Church, or at least much of the indifference to her claims, arises precisely from the fact that religious men could move on complacently, undisturbed by all this ugly environment—from which, however, they often enough escaped themselves—and think and speak of life only in terms of conduct narrowly conceived.

To-day, happily, we become less complacent in face of ugliness. Many deplore its ravages. Newspaper articles and letters pillory the litter, the petrol-pump, the red bungalows and ribbon developments which are creeping across England; and weep over the desecrated village and the ruined countryside. This outcry is not always disinterested; and it is seldom as wise as it might be. It is not disinterested because it deals too exclusively with the ugliness which impinges upon the beauty of select neighbourhoods. It is lacking in wisdom; for it is less than scientific to condemn ugliness only in the spot where it rears its head, whilst leaving untouched the place of its origin. Only a fool is content to kill the individual mosquito in his bedroom, whilst leaving undisturbed the myriad mosquito eggs which are hatch-

ing out in the pool beneath his window. The problem of beauty must be radically faced in industrial areas and in the great cities, or its solution will never be found.

Interest, as well as humanity, demands this drastic treatment of ugliness. For the industrial town is overflowing into the country in a double sense, and everywhere it is carrying with it a menace to the beauty which survives.

Times are changing rapidly. In former days the country flowed into the town and a bare trickle returned back to the country again. Industry was isolated and the country unpolluted. The old beauties were intact. Fine mansions, trim cottages, quiet lanes, and hedgerows where primroses, bluebells and honeysuckle bloomed were left inviolate. The industrial magnate could buy his country mansion and live in peace, forgetful of the waste he had left behind him.

To-day all that is changed. It is easier now to return to the countryside, if only for a day. And it is increasingly difficult for the country to digest the mass of bad taste which pours daily into it. Those who live in spacious splendour in the country talk bitterly of the ugly stream which is overwhelming them—litter, charabancs, disorderly filling stations, clumsy concrete bridges and gaunt, treeless roads. Yet often it is they who are responsible for the lack of beauty. In the towns chimneys, from the mills which they own, belch forth smoke. Their work-folk live in soulless streets, bounded by dumps and grassless fields. What sense of disciplined beauty can such a population ever hope to possess? Such desolate surroundings have killed the Englishmen's innate sense of taste, colour, and form, and ruined the grave dignity of his common life. And when men issue forth from surroundings such as these—and a new mobility is ennabling them to do so—they issue forth form-blind and colour-blind and reckless of a beauty they have never learned to see. The more industrious and successful hoard their savings until they too can escape to country places, and there build petrol stations and bungalows. The remainder can at least take their Sunday or holiday charabanc trip and litter the ground beside the country mansion. Thank God both alike have still the taste to prefer clean air to foul, and green fields to cinder-tips.

But there is more in it than that.

Industry itself spills across the countryside. Commerce must congregate around stock exchanges, with an eye on the cape, an ear at the telephone, and a hand on the neighbour's floor. Industry, on the other hand, can and does decentralize. The electric pylon and the motor-lorry are symbols of the change. Ready power and flexible transit send the factory everywhere. And unless industry itself, and all its surroundings, are rid of the dirt, disorder, ugliness and squalor which we now associate with it, there is small hope left of preserving or increasing our beautiful English heritage.

Happily the situation was never less hopeless than to-day. Ugliness in industry is as needless now as was ugliness in agriculture yesterday. If the rural villages of a by-gone England could grow to be the simple and charming things they are, the industrial villages of the future England may also, in their turn, grow up beside them with a beauty and charm of their own; more formal and precise and geometrical perhaps, but as fit to take their place in the dignity of English life as the formal geometrical St. Paul's is fit to stand beside the freer Gothic of the Abbey. Industry has now no need to be dirty, ugly, or disorderly, and where it is so you see the hall-mark of inefficiency. Other lands are learning to produce all that we produce save the grime and disorder of the process. Nay, more; they are actually learning to produce in industry, and through industry, new and positive forms of beauty. I see glimpses of it everywhere, and notably in Scandinavian lands. These are worth a moment's fuller notice.

Take Sweden as a case in point. The Swedes make use of all that industrialism has to give, and as industrialists they are amazingly efficient. Incidentally there is no country in the world whose whole range of major industrial concerns can at this very moment show so phenomenally prosperous a balance-sheet as Sweden can. Yet the ugly side of modern industrial life is wanting there. Order, method, cleanliness, and positive beauty are the rule. The Stockholm offices of the Swedish Match Factory are a feast of beauty. Grouping themselves about a great courtyard, which you enter through iron gates of splendid craftsmanship, their walls are open to the sun, snowy white above and

pale green marble beneath. In the centre is Carl Mille's fountain, surmounted by a charming emerald-green Diana. Poised on a lofty pedestal, she startles the graceful forest beasts in the four quarters of the court. It is an exquisite creation. Let the efficiency of the Swedish Match Factory speak for itself throughout the world: here it is seen at home, and it walks hand in hand with beauty.

And if you want to make a peculiarly odious comparison, visit the Odelberg pottery works of Sweden and compare them with the works you may see to-day in our own English Staffordshire.

The basis of all this Swedish beauty in industry, it is pertinent to note, is a broad one. It rests upon a studied artistry of common life. You may see this artistry in the Swedish homes. You may see it in tramcars. The conductor who takes your fare slides the coins of different sizes each into its proper slot in a tiny casket on his belt, and releases in a moment the precise sum needed for the change. No fumbling and no disorder. You may see it in restaurants. I often recall a meal which cost me and my wife about eighteen pence apiece. It was eaten in a lovely room, hung with old pictures and tapestries and lit with shaded lights. We had asked for sandwiches, and sandwiches came. But sandwiches the like of which I had never dreamt of before, borne on a gorgeous silver salver, eighteen inches in diameter. In its centre stood a huge glowing red tomato, crowned with the scooped-out end of a cucumber fitting it like a hat. Around this centre-piece were ranged five rounds of bread, but no bread was visible, only the golden butter which concealed it. On one piece was lobster and mayonnaise, on another prawns, on another chicken, on another veal, and on the last were slices of tongue. In between, and around the edges of the dish, were thin slices of orange, each surmounted by a pile of crystal-clear currants, jet-black cherries, or giant raspberries. It was a dish a Holbein might have painted. It was a symbol to me of artistry in common life. And I never saw a dirty table, or a slatternly maid, in all the weeks of my stay in Swedish towns and villages.

Who can wonder that the beauty of such a land is crowned by a Town Hall that has been aptly described as the noblest building which our age has yet produced. Its story reads like an

ancient legend: frescos wrought by a royal prince; councillors' chambers clothed with tapestries from noble homes; while the thousand copper plates which roof the whole with an emerald canopy are the separate gifts of the less wealthy citizens, each zealous to finish a task which a big-hearted municipality had conceived too nobly for its purse. To describe the fierce beauty of Stockholm's Town Hall would lead me too far afield. But it shows what men of our own time can do; and to see it is to understand why architects and men of taste cross a continent and a world to feast upon it.

From Sweden let us return to England and its possibilities. And first to the beauties which we should be wise to preserve; and no land is richer in these than ours. If I pass hastily over the simplest things, just the common trees and fields and wild flowers, it is because we may all take these for granted. Most men of taste to-day recognize the simple, penetrating and sublime judgment of our Lord in His incidental remarks—how much more might He not have said had He spoken of them directly and did we possess a full report of His words—concerning the lilies of the field. Again and again we need to return to these simple appreciations; and from the days of St. Francis and Albrecht Dürer to Millet, Ruskin and the Pre-Raphaelites we have been compelled time and again to renew the vitality and sanity of our taste and art by thought of the common things of field and bank and lane. No child's education is complete; it is hardly begun; until it has learned to love these things. And if there is one movement more than another that we should welcome and encourage in the recreations and amusements of our youth, it is that which sends them by tens of thousands with a stick in their hand and a rücksack on their shoulders rambling through the country for sheer joy of what it yields. Our fields and villages are worth preserving, and the industrial decentralization promises to bring them happily within reach of increasing multitudes.

So are our English country towns worthy of preservation. And their existence is at the moment precarious. Road traffic threatens them. Road lorries thunder through Oxford streets, disturbing old foundations and wrecking ancient calm. Innumerable beauties are sacrificed as congestion grows. Towns

like these are bottlenecks on great high roads, and if we would preserve their beauties traffic must be diverted along loops : and well-planned loops serve the double purpose alike of controlling the encroachment of industrial works, and preserving the town unspoilt, a delightful companion to a new and well-designed industrial area. Park-like zones should guard an ancient town from all encroachments, and give each child and adult a chance of moving among green things and simple beauties. Nuremberg preserves its classic form and features like a jewel in the centre of the modern industrial town which encircles it beyond the city ramparts and the girdle of green fields.

More important still, however, is the creation of new beauties; and they must be beauties expressive of our present age, as the Parthenon expressed the soul of Greece and Chartres that of the Middle Ages. Preservation is only half our task, and antiquarian zeal is no substitute for life. We must bring out of our treasure things new and old, we should do well to observe the point of emphasis. We must learn from the past and dare for the future. England is to be more than a museum.

The past has principles to teach us and chiefest of these is order, proportion, reticence and emphasis. All classical cities of the past speak with the same voice. Take Siena. Its houses are standard in size; its roofs of equal brick; and all are fashioned with a uniform and beautiful brick. This presents the quick and unexciting background where the common citizen learns and practises the dignity of restraint. It presents the foil against which public buildings stand forth in splendour of planning and richness of material; the great town square; the town hall and the cathedral, splendid alike in curve and space and glowing in marble and gold. And the same is true of Venice, where uniformity marks the houses flanking the quiet canals and quiet streets and provides a fitting emphasis for the mighty piazza and the splendours of Campanile, Doge's Palace and St. Mark's Cathedral.

Would that such order, reticence and suppression marked Regent Street in London, or Market Street in Manchester, with their sky-line ragged and restless, fatiguing the eye by the babel it sees as the ear by the babel it hears.

Restraint and alinement must as surely be the notes of the classic city of to-morrow as they were the notes of the classic city

of yesterday. To copy the precise form in which this principle embodied itself is futile. It is the spirit, not the letter, that counts. But the principles of order and restraint are themselves eternal and within their beautifully restricted lines there is ample scope for individuality. And never, perhaps, to turn again to this special application, the city street, was it so easy to secure such unity of skyline in our cities as it is to-day, when steel and concrete offer us strong flat roofs. What splendours Regent Street might have afforded to a wiser people, with a noble sweep of cornice and balustrade from one end to the other; and accommodating a secondary street along its summit lined with flowers and shrubs and open restaurants. But it is vain to dream of noble cities till we provide clean ones. Dirt destroys beauty and thwarts its creation. And here again I cannot but compare Swedish towns with our own, though I might speak from experience of a Milan in Italy or a Barcelona in Spain. In Stockholm the air is clean. Roses climb the Town Hall walls. Low oak hedges growing, as box hedges grow in English gardens, on the parterres which slope from the Town Hall to the lake are as pure as if they grew on the shores of Loch Lomond. I changed my collar daily from habit, not need, in Stockholm; and Stockholm has half a million souls. Why should hotels in Stockholm heat and cook with Manchester coke whilst Manchester hotels darken the air with raw coal? We boast of our cleanly bodies, and we have banished foul drains and garbage from our streets. But nine-tenths of Englishmen are patient with the sewage of the air; it permeates everything; rots our buildings and fabrics; ruins paint and decorations and kills off thousands with respiratory diseases. It effectually robs us of the sun's vitalizing rays.

Though my deanery was made brand-new when I entered it five years ago, I have spent at least another needless £100 directly through the ravages of dirty air, and the cost to the cathedral runs into thousands to every hundred of mine. Multiply these two items alone through all the houses and public buildings and stores of Manchester and you get a vision of the cost of smoke. And what chance has beauty in a city like that? Shrubs last three years in an Ancoats park. Then they die. Our plant-rearing greenhouses have been removed far from the city: we transplant the plant-children. The human children remain and wilt. None should know it better than I. On Whitmonday

Manchester Sunday School children march in procession past the cathedral. It takes four hours and a half for them to pass. I shake hands with their teachers and see the scholars at close range. They are physically C3 children; and like the plants, they suffer primarily through lack of sun and air.

Civic health and civic beauty are simply impossible in conditions like these. The colour-sense of Lancashire is dying. We dread strong heraldic colours. Some well-travelled Lancashire cotton merchants indeed are at last perceiving that our printed cottons are failing, through our lack of colour originality; and many a man thought that I had robbed Manchester Cathedral of its *religious* tone when I washed its windows and walls—at immense cost—and introduced rich colour in flowers and fabrics. The gloom and filth have blocked up our colour avenues to beauty.

Fundamentally the position is not hopeless. Vested interest, ignorance, and sluggish public opinion alone bar us from a new order of cleanliness. Science gives us smokeless fuel for our open fires or smokeless means of raising steam. My open fires of smokeless fuel are the envy of my friends. They save my pocket and keep the skies clean. Mr. Ford's power plant would drive any ordinary town. It makes no smoke. Neither domestic smoke nor factory smoke are needful. Intelligent interest could banish them. At the moment that interest is lacking. A month ago I inspected a new, comparatively costless, and extremely simple appliance fitted to the Lancashire boiler of a Manchester brewery works which had been in frequent conflict with the police for smoke pollution. The chimney was completely cured. The largest stores and the largest hotel in Liverpool employ this same appliance. It is fitted for free trial for a month. Its cost of £75 is soon recouped by the coal-saving it effects. A month ago the Dean of New York saw my Deanery fires after he had been horrified with a railway journey through Lancashire. He rejoiced at their brightness and warmth and said 'How grateful Lancashire must be to you for this deliverance!' But Lancashire is not, I fear, as yet even interested. Ignorance is rampant in all classes. Public opinion sleeps, unaware of the costliness and deadliness of foul air, and millions are robbed of the beauty and the health they need.

Finally, we must pass beyond these negative things. It is our duty to create, not only to preserve or to avoid. We must create beauties which shall be really expressive of the age we live in, and embody in emotional form its achievements. The nature of these new beauties already begins to shape itself. The body-work of our motor-cars shows it. The lines and bonnet of a Vauxhall car thrill me, and I like them none the less because they are mass-produced: indeed it is time we ceased to deplore mass-products as necessarily inartistic. The air-liner is beautiful. The bridge and promenade deck of an ocean steamer are beautiful. I would even be so bold as to say that an electric pylon has a beauty of its own as it strides across the countryside. To me at any rate it is the symbol of the cleanly power: and it is a masculine thing. M. le Corbusier shows, in a fascinating analysis, how close is the affinity between cleanness of line and directness of purpose in the modern vehicle on the one hand, and the Parthenon of Pheidias or the apses of Michael Angelo at St. Peter's Cathedral in Rome on the other. Both results from a studied selection crowned by the touch of aesthetic genius.

It is in this direction that we must look if we are to create the fundamentals of a beautiful environment. For the prime essentials in this regard are beautiful houses, beautifully placed, flooded with air and light, and in intimate contact with green and growing things. I do not ignore music, painting or literature as vehicles of beauty, but in this paper I have confined myself to those fundamental aspects of beauty which are most neglected and yet most vital, and upon whose possession so much else depends.

At the moment the places where we dwell and work are, in general, beautiful neither in themselves nor in their planning. Our homes are ill-thought-out. They take no adequate account of modern needs and possibilities. They are not standardized. Therefore they lack the chance of being ennobled with beauties characteristic of to-day. Think of motor-cars and the steps by which their beauty grew. First they were standardized. The prime needs of speed and comfort were secured. These elements are common to all cars now. But you and I need more than these merely utilitarian things. We have an emotional nature. We need something to touch it; something to charm

and attract. Hence the fierce competition among the motor-car firms, and the aesthetic concentration which has at length produced the lovely and expressive lines of modern motor-cars. Standardization, mass-production, and then the touch of aesthetic genius, not as an added or applied thing, but as a thing growing out of the heart as it were of the car itself, its own proper contour and profile. That is the order of procedure in cars.

And that must be the order of procedure in the house. We want the standardized house: that is the house which takes account of modern demands for air and light and proper heating; the house in which windows are large, walls thin and built of heat-preserving and sound-absorbing materials. Thick walls are not the warmest and they absorb light by deep abrasures. We want the house where no space is wasted, no unnecessary angles give access to dirt or obstruct the vacuum-cleaner, and where the roof is flat and used as a solarium; houses which produce a sense of calm and require a minimum of labour to run them. Steel, concrete, and synthetic materials can give us all we need, and when such houses are mass-produced they can be provided at a fraction of the present cost and graded according to our need as cars are graded from a Baby Austin to a Rolls Royce.

And when once this standard house appears then, as Corbusier points out, the real skill and genius of the architect can begin its work. The touch of genius will play around the common given elements, the windows, doors, roofs and wall spaces. Line proportion and mouldings will undergo subtle changes. Like the apses of St. Peter's, or the cornice of the Parthenon, the mathematical and classical quality will enter into them. The perfect profile and contour will appear. A new style, expressive of our own age, will be born and our emotions will be touched to a more exalted tone by the daily environment of life. We shall dwell among spacious things—which need not necessarily be large things—as John Stuart Mill did for a significant period of his youth, and be moulded by their impact as was he.

So much for the beauty that we anticipate in the modern house unit; a beauty gathering up and expressing all that is finest in, and of, a mechanical scientific and hygienic age. A wide uniformity there may be. That in itself need not militate

against beauty: the bricks of Rome at its best were uniform and beautiful: it was in their grouping and composition that variety entered in. At the same time, though I conceive of a whole series of standardized houses, some large, some small, and some medium-sized, and each grade varying according to its functions, I should be the last one to rule out marked touches of genius or individuality where these can be created or afforded. It is in the interest of men of limited means, and that all may be housed and housed in dignity, and that certain broad and grand lines in house structure may be evolved, that I plead for standard houses. America discovered that she had several thousand different kinds of knives—to take an example whose exact figures I have not at the moment of writing before me—she cut them down in number to some hundreds, concentrated, thought upon them, standardized them, and cheapened them: there is still variety enough of knives, but every knife is a better knife and a cheaper knife than it was possible to procure before. So it might be with houses. And we should then possess, as we do not today, noble elements for groups of building.

So finally we turn to the groupings themselves; to the village, the garden suburb, and the city. Natural features must be woven into each as part and parcel of the whole. A prime element in the charm of the Parthenon consists in the use made of the distant horizon in the make-up of its theme. Art and nature blend; the two beauties hang together and each exalts the other. So the new beauties of building and grouping will tend to ally themselves on all hands with nature. In place of the present ugly rows of slum or villa houses there will be bold and rich and expressive combinations of the various standard houses, of whatever order these may be. Glimpses of the new possibilities we may get in Sir Theodore Chambers' Larkhill flats at Clapham, where, despite the threefold greater population which he houses, an effect of spacious and parklike surroundings replaces the old plainness and congestion. And the same effect of spaciousness, and the entrance of light and air, and the play of water in pool and fountain, marks equally the new Mattiottihof municipal tenements in Vienna. In the Bordeaux-Pessac we may see mass-produced, and nature grouped, housing applied even in populated areas with conspicuous success; so also in the Tony Garnier Schemes for Lyons.

The decentralization of industry gives us at this very moment just the opportunity we seek. The old congestion of industrial areas is breaking up, and with it may go the real monotony of the old ugly unit houses and their entire banishment from natural beauty. A new grouping of finely-designed unit houses surrounding such an industrial unit as Messrs. Heinemann's splendidly-designed Windmill Press at Kingswood, with its classical facade, its lawns and flower-beds and sedate collegiate character, will create in the English industrial village a beauty no whit behind the noblest beauties of the rural village of the past.

Turn to the city of the future. Rid of its smoke and industrial operations, freed too from the immense congested populations which these involved, and with its own commercial workers housed in suitable garden suburbs, the city of the future can become as nobly expressive of our age and restful to work in as to-day it is mean and meaningless and huddled and fatiguing. We must do with the city what we have already done with the workshops of industry. I contrast the Ford or Morris workshop of to-day with the shops I knew thirty years ago. Space, restraint, order, cleanliness, lightness, brightness, fitness reign, where once all was dark, dirty, huddled and cramped. Though it looks less busy, it is a thousandfold more efficient. Here is the model for our cities.

I think of my own Manchester. Its streets are narrow and congested, the winding lanes of an old market town are still made to serve the needs of a traffic a hundredfold greater than the traffic for which they were designed. Consequently we possess vehicles which are capable of travelling sixty miles an hour, yet must crawl along at four. There is the tedious journey into town in the morning and the struggle out at night. Offices are approached through narrow streets and narrower corridors : most of them are dark and noisy, close to the dust and din of the street. We suffer from wear and tear. Beauty is banished; for a hurried life is not a beautiful life.

If we would really face the problem of the beautiful city, and it is there that most men spend the bulk of their conscious hours, we had better take seriously to heart the admirable recommendations of the Town Planning Congress at Strasbourg in 1923; recommendations which at first sight seem hopeless of achieve-

ment until we remember the possibilities that lie hidden away in the engineers' concrete and steel. Four principles are laid down: (1) We must de-congest the centres of our cities and facilitate our traffic; (2) we must increase the density of our cities and bring about the close contact demanded by business; (3) we must increase the means by which traffic can circulate, *i.e.* we must modify the conception of the street, which has become useless for modern transport needs; and (4) we must increase the area of green and open spaces.

M. le Corbusier, better than most, shows how these objects can be achieved. He has, in conjunction with M. Voisin of motor-car fame, worked out the details of his theme in regard to Paris. He repudiates the present lay-out of our towns. He learns lessons from America and avoids her mistakes. He utilizes the skyscraper and improves on it in size and disposition. He brings together at points relatively distant, the dense masses of commercial population and houses them in enormous structures of say sixty stories high, built in concrete and steel and with immense windows commanding uninterrupted views. These towers will in his scheme arise, not as in the America of to-day all huddled together, darkening streets and dwarfing man, but built at great distances from each other. By virtue of their height these island towers will house as big a population or bigger than at present congregates and yet leave enormous open spaces in between and unimpeded views from each. Ninety per cent. of the city could be reserved for open space and through these open spaces mighty traffic ways would run, probably in two or three tiers suiting all grades of traffic. At the foot of the towers parks would stretch, and man's eye would be led up to them not abruptly as in New York, but gently past the open-air restaurants, and one-storied shops, and trees and shrubs up to the larger buildings—picture galleries, ancient monuments worth preserving and the like—and so on to the mighty and imposing avenues of cathedralesque towers crowning all and reflecting the sky in their great glass, cliff-like walls. Business men could then speed straight from their country villas in their own cars, find ample room to park them, and in a few moments be sitting high up in an airy, sunny office far above the dust and traffic noises. Their clerks could arrive as speedily from the garden suburbs nearer at hand.

What a changed life it would be for all; and how possible. Nature, in the form of light, air, space, vistas, and green things would enter into daily tasks and could ennoble them. And if we dread the expense of the change-over, we have but to remind ourselves, as Corbusier does, of two things. First the rapidity with which a new skyscraper in New York repays the cost of the old one pulled down; or more significant still of the experience of M. Haussmann in the Paris of a hundred years ago. His operations were as drastic for his own day as those here proposed are for ours, considering the relative positions of engineering achievement of each period. Yet he lived to revolutionise Paris with his operations: it is hard indeed to conceive how Paris could exist today apart from what he did. He was charged with ruining the emperor by his proposals; in the sequel he filled the Emperor's coffers with gold, multiplying the value of his property five times over.

For all these things great spiritual qualities will be needed: courage, daring, vision and an immense power of working together and the suppression of individual whim for the larger good. If people would have clean cities, and fine habitations and natural beauty unpolluted all around them they must work for these things in unison. Italy or Russia may command them from above. That is not our way. Laws there must always be, if we are to make for these things, and the State must help; but the state here can never march very far ahead of public opinion; though I venture to think it must always be at least some stages ahead and must go before to crystallize the visions and desires of the more clear-sighted few. After all the mass of Englishmen respect law and suffer their opinions to be moulded largely by it, however lazy they may be politically themselves and however much they may leave it to the keen-minded minority to pass and commend the laws. But public opinion on a wide scale must be educated and won if the goal is to be reached. We must teach in season and out the deadliness and essential irreligion of dirt, disorder and ugliness; we must show the possibility of clearer visions of God as with eager eyes we look not only through the avenues of truth and goodness, but also through those of beauty.